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DONA CHRISTI

Meditations for Ascension-tide
Whitsun-tide and Corpus Christi

BY

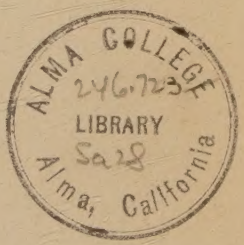
MOTHER ST. PAUL

RELIGIOUS OF THE RETREAT OF THE SACRED HEART
HOUSE OF RETREATS, BIRMINGHAM

AUTHOR OF "SPONSA CHRISTI," "PASSIO CHRISTI," ETC.

PREFACE BY

REV. JOSEPH RICKABY, S.J.



"Dedit dona hominibus"

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PREFACE

THE Ascension, Pentecost, Corpus Christi, Sacred Heart, these four feasts form the quadrilateral within which these Meditations are contained. We read in Acts xix. how St. Paul asked certain disciples at Ephesus whether they had received the Holy Ghost, to which they replied: "Why, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Ghost." There are Christians, sealed with the Holy Ghost in Baptism and Confirmation, who are not very much more mindful of Him than were those Ephesians. It is an epoch in a Christian's life when he may be said to "discover the Holy Ghost" as a real, living Presence intimate to him. These Meditations may help to such a discovery. They are a worthy continuation of the experienced authoress's previous productions. Thus the Seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost are set forth in seven thoughtful Meditations—*e. g.* on the Gift of Understanding, we read: "Those who understand, bear reproof. *He that yieldeth to reproof possesseth understanding* (Prov. xv. 32). Here is another test for me, one which I do not much like, but which I had better face. When a criticism is made on my work, when it is suggested that I have forgotten something, or left something undone, then is my opportunity of testing whether I am using my Gift of Understanding." It has been noticed how the Sacred Heart leads on to the Holy

Ghost. Both devotions speak to us of "the inner man of the heart, who is rich before GOD" (1 Pet. iii. 4). They are devotions of the interior life. Besides the Gifts, there is the Inhabitation of the Holy Ghost, of which more might have been said; but something must be left for the Exercitant to supply himself.

JOSEPH RICKABY, S.J.

October 13, 1919.

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PRAYERS

O Holy Spirit, divine Spirit of light and love, I consecrate to Thee my understanding, heart and will, my whole being, for time and for eternity. May my understanding be always submissive to Thy heavenly inspirations, and to the teaching of the Catholic Church, of which Thou art the infallible Guide; may my heart be ever inflamed with love of God and of my neighbour; may my will be ever conformed to the imitation of the life and virtues of Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, to Whom with the Father and Thee be honour and glory for ever. Amen.

(300 days once a day.)

Veni, Pater pauperum,
Veni, dator munerum,
Veni, lumen cordium

Come, Father of the poor,
Come, Giver of gifts,
Come, Light of hearts.
(Sequence.)

Fiat, laudetur atque in æternum superexaltetur justissima, altissima, et amabilissima voluntas Dei in omnibus.

May the most just, most high and most adorable will of God be in all things done, praised and magnified for ever.
(100 days once a day.)

DONA CHRISTI

HOW TO ASK FOR CHRIST'S GIFTS

Fifth Sunday after Easter.

"*If you ask the Father anything in My Name, He will give it you*" (St. John xvi. 23).

1*st Prelude.* Kneeling at the Feet of JESUS, Who is saying these words to me.
2*nd Prelude.* The grace to ask aright.

THESE words from to-day's Gospel come very near the end of Christ's last discourse to His disciples. He has been telling them that there is only "a little while" now, that He can tarry with them—that He must "leave the world and go to the Father." He sees that, because He has said these things to them, sorrow has filled their hearts, and He cheers and consoles them by the promise of *gifts*. Amongst the gifts are:—

(1) The Paraclete (ver. 7), Who will "receive of Mine and show it to you"—that is, He will hand you My gifts, for "all things whatsoever the Father hath are Mine" (vers. 14 and 15).

(2) The gift of joy—a joy so sure that "no man shall take it from you" (ver. 22).

(3) The greatest of all My gifts—Myself to be always with you. "Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (St. Matt. xxviii. 20).

(4) And lastly, the permission to ask the Father for whatever you want, and to use My Name as a guarantee.

Between now and the Feast of the Sacred Heart we shall meditate on these gifts of Christ; and to-day, on this Sunday before *Rogation*-tide (or *Asking*-tide), we will take the last gift—the permission to *ask*. "If you ask the Father anything in My Name, He will give it you."

Point I.—"Ask the Father"

"Because the Father Himself loveth you." He loved you so much that He sent His only Beloved Son to die for you; and He loves you more now because you have loved *Me;* and have believed that I came out from God (ver. 27). You, My little flock, have trusted Him as a Father, by loving Me, His Son, and believing that He sent Me—and this in the midst of a world which neither loves nor believes. The Father appreciates this filial conduct, and He, on His side, will treat you as sons. "You shall ask what you will and He will give it you." "If you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father Who is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him" (St. Matt. vii. 11). His hands are full of gifts—*My* gifts—He is ready and waiting to give. Waiting for *what?* For you to ask. "Ask then and it shall be given you" (ver. 7).

And so, at the bidding of Jesus Christ Himself, we are going on these Rogation Days to ask for gifts—for good gifts. The Church, in the Rogation Litanies and the beautiful prayers that follow, guides us as to what to pray for. After bidding us ask all the Saints to pray for us, she mentions every possible need that any one could have, and makes us pray for them. Thus she would have us obey

the command: *Ask.* And in case our own particular need does not seem to be provided for, we have Our Lord's comprehensive word, *anything.* If you shall ask *anything* He will give it. What royal bounty! What a privilege to be the children of such a Father! What a joy to know that this gift of Christ's is ours! What a security to be a child of the Church! Let me prove my gratitude by entering into her spirit to-morrow and the following days—if not in public, at least in private—and saying the Litanies and prayers that she puts into the mouths of her children. This may mean a little sacrifice of time; but even so we shall be in the spirit of the Church, who, though it is still Paschal-tide, bids her ministers put on vestments of mourning, because their Master is so soon to be taken from them.

Point II.—"In My Name"

There is one condition—"Through Jesus Christ Our Lord." Words familiar to us from our babyhood, but what do they mean?

1. They mean that I have no right or title of my own; my right lies in the fact that I am a member of Christ. When I go, then, to the Father to ask for anything, I must always present His Son's Name: "Him the Father heareth always," and He will hear all His other children for the sake of their Elder Brother. He has earned the graces and gifts that I need and ask for. I am a poor sinner and have nothing of my own to plead, but *He* is worthy, and I plead His merits and say: For His sake, give me what I ask. *Per ipsum et cum ipso et in ipso.* (Through Him, and with Him, and in Him.) Thus we plead His merits in the Holy Mass. And the Father cannot refuse, for to refuse the younger son would be to refuse the Elder Brother, Who has promised: "If you ask anything in My Name, it shall be given to you."

2. To ask in Christ's Name means that he who asks is Christ's *friend*. To use the name of any one implies an understanding—a friendship between the one who asks the favour and him whose name is presented as a guarantee. And before I can use the Name of Christ as my guarantee, I must be sure that there is an understanding between us—sure that He counts me as one of His friends. It is not difficult to be sure on this point, for He tells me Himself how I may know: "You are My friends, if you do whatsoever I command you." And if I am conscious, as I must often be, that I am falling short of the test, what then? Am I to mourn over the fact that I have no Friend to speak for me—no blessed Name to use? Oh no, for my Friend is the Friend of sinners; it is quite easy—for He has made it so—to go and be reconciled to my Brother (St. Matt. v. 24). He has Himself provided the Sacrament of Reconciliation that I may never remain out of His friendship. Then *in His Name* His minister will pardon my sins, and the perfect understanding between us will be renewed.

Again, if I use my Friend's Name with my petition, I cannot ask for anything He would not like. If I plead His merits, it means that I am only asking for something that He has already purchased for me. I should not think of using a friend's name and a friend's money to get things of which I know he would not approve! My tastes, my desires, my will—all must fit in with those of my friend: this is surely the understanding that there was between us when he said that I might use his name. What are my relations with my Friend Jesus, with my Elder Brother, with Him "Who is more friendly than a brother"? (Prov. xviii. 24). Is our union so close that I shall only ask for the things of which He can approve,—for the things that are for His glory and my salvation? If so, there will be no importunate asking for difficulties, troubles,

sicknesses, poverty to be removed, and then almost charging GOD with not hearing because they are not removed! No, but rather a trust so great in the Friend Whose Name we present, that, when we ask for the "*good gifts*" which He has promised shall be ours, we are quite ready to count *these* amongst them—gifts of His choice, special marks of His favour to His friends.

To ask in Christ's Name, then, means much. Let me think of it as I join in the Church's great petitions during the three Days of Rogation that are coming.

Colloquy, with Him Who, "ascending on high, . . . *gave gifts* to men" (Eph. iv. 8), and among them the permission to use His Name.

Resolution. To prepare my presentation carefully to-day.

Spiritual Bouquet. "If you ask the Father anything in My Name, He will give it you."

ELIAS AND THE RAIN

Rogation Monday.

"*The continual prayer of a just man availeth much*" (from the "Epistle," St. James v. 16).

1*st Prelude.* Elias sitting on the top of Mount Carmel, "his face between his knees," praying for rain.
2*nd Prelude.* Grace to pray.

THE uppermost thought in the mind of the Church expressed by her Rogation Litanies, seems to be that of reconciliation. GOD'S judgments are in the earth; He is chastising His people for their iniquities; and the Church would have us humble ourselves by penance (the purple vestments show this), confess our sins, and pray that GOD'S wrath may be averted, so that we may again enjoy His gifts, and especially that *He will vouchsafe to give and preserve the fruits of the earth.* We unite ourselves with all the company of Heaven, asking all the Angels and Saints to join in our supplication and intercede for us. And then the Holy Sacrifice is offered as a public acknowledgment of our guilt and a public prayer for pardon. And the whole world gets a blessing through the Church, who is "the salt of the earth," for GOD "maketh His sun to rise upon the good and bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust" (St. Matt. v. 45).

The "Epistle" for the Mass of the Rogations emphasises all these motives for our prayers. It counsels us to *confess our sins;* to *pray for one another*, that we may be saved from GOD'S judgments; and it gives

us an example of Elias, who by prayer averted GOD's anger and made the *earth bring forth her fruit.*

Let us meditate on this story from Elias' life, which the Church brings to our notice to-day.

Point I.—ELIAS ESPOUSES GOD'S CAUSE

The first thing we read about this great man of GOD is that he proclaimed to all the people of Israel that there should be no "dew nor rain three years, but according to the words of my mouth" (3 Kings xvii. 1). St. James tells us that this was because "with prayer he prayed that it might not rain upon the earth, and it rained not for three years and six months." Israel had been filling up the cup of her iniquity. Of king after king we read that "they sinned before the Lord and made Israel to sin, provoking the Lord, the GOD of Israel, to anger with their vanities." Now, Achab was on the throne, and "he did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him," and crowned it by marrying a heathen wife and worshipping her god Baal. "He did more to provoke the Lord, the GOD of Israel, than all the kings of Israel that were before him." And it is when GOD is provoked that His judgments are at hand. Elias, who just at this crisis appeared on the scene, was a man who saw things from GOD's point of view; he knew that nothing but chastisement would bring the erring people back to the true GOD and His worship, and so, moved by the Holy Spirit, he prayed for a *famine.* At the end of three years the people were humbled by suffering, and their hearts, at the prayer of Elias, were turned again to GOD. It was in answer to his prayer, too, that they saw GOD manifest His power by sending fire from Heaven to consume Elias' sacrifice—a sign which Baal's worshippers had asked for in vain—and they fell on their faces, saying: The Lord *He* is GOD, the Lord *He* is GOD The

prayer of the just man had availed much. It had caused sinners to be converted from the error of their ways, by humbling them and making them confess their sins. But now that they had done their work, Elias wanted GOD's judgments to stop and His wrath to be averted; he wanted the rain to come, that the earth might bring forth her fruit, and so we see him mounting "to the top of Carmel and casting himself down upon the earth with his face between his knees," praying till his servant, who at his bidding had gone for the seventh time to look towards the sea, came back with the joyful news that "a little cloud had arisen out of the sea like a man's foot"; and soon the heavens grew dark "with clouds and wind" and there was "a great rain."

Thus does GOD answer the prayer of His servants who co-operate with Him. The prayer of one just man was sufficient to leaven the whole of the kingdom of Israel. Let the thought of Elias, who was "a man passible like unto us," encourage us to be fervent in our prayers this Rogation-tide; that we too may have the joy of causing sinners to be converted from the error of their ways, and GOD's judgments to be averted from the earth, though we may have to wait till we get to Heaven before we know that our prayers have been answered.

Point II.—GOD ESPOUSES THE CAUSE OF ELIAS

If it is true that GOD makes the sun to shine on the evil as well as on the good, it is equally true that the good suffer as well as the evil when GOD's judgments are in the earth. But GOD never forgets His children, and though His protecting Hand may seem to be withdrawn, He always does the best for them.

At the beginning of the famine GOD knew that His servant's life would be in danger, not only from want of food, but also because he had identified

himself with the GOD of Israel and appeared as His messenger. The people knew well enough that it was *his* doing that "there was a great famine throughout all the earth" (St. Luke iv. 25). So GOD told him to go and hide himself by the torrent of Carith. "And there thou shalt drink of the torrent, and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there." How unlikely it sounded! But Elias was a man of faith, and he did as GOD told him; and there regularly every morning and every evening the ravens came with bread and flesh, and he drank of the torrent. Thus GOD lavished His gifts upon this just man, whose prayer was so necessary for the guilty land. But "after some time the drought became so great that even the *torrent* dried up." Then GOD gave him another order: "Go to Sarephta and dwell there, for I have commanded a widow-woman there to feed thee." This sounded less promising even than the ravens! Who could be poorer in a famine than a *widow-woman!* But Elias, great and powerful though he was, was trustful, dependent and obedient as a little child. This accounts for his being so useful to GOD, and this explains why his prayers "availed much." "He arose and went." It was a long journey, for Sarephta was a city of the Sidonians outside the kingdom of Israel. He found the widow-woman, who was a Gentile, in the last extremity of want, gathering sticks to light a fire to cook what she supposed would be the last meal she and her son would ever eat. She only needed *two* sticks, for all she had left was "a handful of meal and a little oil in a cruse." The prophet asked her for a little water, and, as she was going to fetch it, he called after her, saying: "Bring me also, I beseech thee, a morsel of bread in thy hand." This was more difficult, and she turned to explain the sad condition she was in. "I have no bread," only a handful of meal and a little oil! Then Elias, full of faith in

GOD'S "command," said to her: Fear not. Go and use your last handful of meal and your last drop of oil to make me "a little hearth cake." Trust GOD, give what you have to Him, and He, on His side, will not forget you, for thus saith the Lord, the GOD of Israel: "The pot of meal shall not waste nor the cruse of oil be diminished until the day when the Lord will give rain upon the face of the earth."

Let us, with this wonderful story in our minds, pray our Rogation prayers, knowing that they will be heard if we imitate the example of the great prophet of old—that is, if we are full of *confidence* even when things look black; if we are ready to *obey* GOD'S commands, however difficult or even absurd they may seem to our limited comprehension; if we have *courage* enough to espouse GOD'S cause in the face of opposition; in a word, if we are *simple, child-like, dependent.* The prayers of such *avail much.*

Colloquy. "We beseech Thee, O Lord, mercifully to receive our prayers; that while we partake of Thy *gifts* in our affliction, the consolation we find may increase our love" ("Post Communion" for the Mass of the Rogation Days).

Resolution. To examine myself to-day, as to my prayers, and the likelihood of their availing much.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Ask and it shall be given you" (from the "Communion" for the Mass of the Rogation Days).

THE IMPORTUNATE FRIEND

Rogation Tuesday.

"*If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children: how much more will your Father Who is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him*" (St. Matt. vii. 11).

1*st Prelude.* At the Feet of JESUS, Who is teaching me how to ask.

2*nd Prelude.* Grace to understand and learn my lesson.

THE "Gospel" for the Mass of the Rogations (St. Luke xi. 5–13) sets before us a picture of Christ teaching His disciples to pray. They noticed Him one day "in a certain place praying," and something—we are not told what it was—struck them. Something which, while they waited for Him to finish—for they could not interrupt Him—made them feel that they did not know how to pray at all. There was evidently a vast difference between His method of prayer and theirs, and they were filled with a desire to learn His method and to pray as He did. So "when He had ceased, one of His disciples said to Him: 'Lord, teach *us* to pray.'" Immediately He was ready with His *gifts*, and gave them the Prayer which was to be the Church's treasure throughout all time. When you pray, say: "Father, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation." And then, to make them understand better the kind of prayer that appealed to His Father, He

told them the story of the importunate friend, for He knew that it was the earnest insistence of His own prayer which had struck them. By this parable He taught them, and us too, many things about prayer, upon which we shall do well to meditate on this day of Rogation.

Point I.—Whom to Ask—"A Friend"

"Which of you shall have *a friend* and shall go to him . . ." A *friend* will not mind being troubled, and he is sure to give. What does Our Lord mean? He means that we are to go to God in our prayers with the firm conviction that He is a Friend Who will never be weary of us and Who is sure to give; that our trust and confidence in Him are to be such that He, on His side, is not afraid to entrust His gifts to us, that He is able to look upon us and trust us as friends, as He did Moses of old, of whom it was said: "The Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man is wont to speak to his friend" (Exod. xxxiii. 11). Why was Abraham called the friend of God? (2 Paral. xx. 7; Isaias xli. 8). Why did God feel that He could not keep His secrets from him? (Gen. xviii. 17). It was because of his child-like confidence in God. So Our Lord would teach us that the first secret of praying well is to go with the confidence of a friend to a Friend. It is the "Friend of sinners" (St. Matt. xi. 19) Who is teaching us this lesson, He Who is more friendly to us than a brother (Prov. xviii. 24), and Who is so anxious for us to understand that His Father is our Friend too—"the Father Himself loveth you" (St. John xvi. 27).

The first thing, then, that I will remember in my prayers this Rogation-tide is that *God is my Friend*, glad to be asked and ready to give.

Point II.—When to Ask—"At Midnight"

"Which of you shall have a friend and shall go to him *at midnight*." At the most inconvenient of all hours, at the most unreasonable time, when all is black, dark, desolate, and the need is most pressing. Yes, this is just the time when our thoughts turn naturally towards a friend. We could not go to anybody else at such an hour, but a friend will consider no time unreasonable, no hour inconvenient. So if the times are dark and dreary, if it is midnight in my soul, if I am sore pressed and know not where to turn for help, there will be no thought of putting off to a more appropriate time or waiting till things are brighter. Rather I shall remember that this is God's moment, and that this time of darkness and desolation has probably been specially arranged by Him to force me to go to Him.

The second thing I have, then, to remember in my prayers is that the more desperate and hopeless the case seems to be, the more reason there is for me to ask God about it.

Point III.—Why to Ask—"Because I have not"

"A friend of mine is come off his journey to me, and I have not what to set before him." I have nothing in my house, either for myself or for others, unless Thou dost give it me. Only from Thee can I get what I want. A friend of mine on his journey to the Heavenly City has stopped to ask an alms; he wants, it may be, direction, advice, help, comfort, sympathy, charity, encouragement, instruction, but I have nothing to set before him. What can I do? It is quite simple. Each one who stops to ask an alms of me has been directed to me by the King of the Country to which he is travelling. And

by sending him to me, the King shows that He means to give the necessary help *through me*. I am bound therefore to apply at once to the King and see what He wants me to set before him. I am only the servant, and have no right to give without my Master's permission, neither have I any right to withhold any of the goods He has given me to distribute for Him. I simply dare not send the friend on his journey empty away! So a swift raising of the heart and mind to God, a quick "*Commoda mihi*" (*furnish me* with what I want), coming from one who knows that he has nothing, and who also knows that he can have all things for the asking—and the difficulty is removed. How simple is prayer! "You have not because you ask not" (St. James iv. 2).

Point IV.—What to Ask for—"Three Loaves"

We must be definite in our prayer—know what we want and ask for it—ask for what we want at the moment, not for all sorts of graces that we may never want, nor for strength to meet difficulties that may never come! Ask for present needs for ourselves and our friends. Ask for the *Living Bread*, and also for whatever bread is necessary to set before those who come to us. "Give us this day our daily bread."

Point V.—How to Ask—"Continue Knocking"

My Friend, though He hears my knock, knows my need and has the gift all ready, does not always come at once. He loves to hear the knock, for it speaks of trust and friendship, and He would hear it more than once. Besides, the suspense and anxiety in which He keeps me deepen my trust, and increase my love and desire. I am not to be

put off because, apparently, there is no answer. I am not to grow weary or discouraged, or think my Friend indifferent or even hard. I understand my Friend, and I know that this is often His wont; my faith shall be strong enough to grasp the situation. It is *bread* that I want, and a father cannot refuse his children bread. So I mean to take no denial, but to keep on till the door is open.

This is the kind of prayer that JESUS recommends to the disciples, and this is the kind of prayer that will appeal to His Father in Rogation-tide.

Point VI.—THE RESPONSE—"AS MANY AS HE NEEDETH"

"Because of his importunity, he will rise and give him as many as he needeth"—because he acted with all the confidence and love of a true friend, who *refused* to believe that his friend would not help him. Such is our God, waiting to be gracious, yet loving and valuing the confidence of His children so much that He keeps them waiting that He may have more of it. Then, when expectancy and confidence and desire are perfected, comes the answer "as many (loaves) as he needeth"—it is GOD'S measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over (St. Luke vi. 38).

"Whatever you shall ask." He cannot keep anything back if the conditions are fulfilled. The need is bound to be supplied.

All things are yours.
And you are Christ's.
And Christ is GOD'S. } 1 Cor. iii. 23.

Christ is GOD'S. "All things whatsoever the Father hath are Mine" (St. John xvi. 15).

You are Christ's. "You are My friends if you do the things that I command you" (chap. xv. 14).

All things are yours, for "He shall receive of Mine and show it to you" (chap. xvi. 14).

What a picture! How it brings home to us our rights as children of the Kingdom! Let us keep the picture before us to-day, and it will throw a fresh light on our Rogation Litanies.

Colloquy with JESUS, Who is saying to me: "Ask and it shall be given you, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you." It may be that you will not get exactly what you asked for, nor just what you expected, but GOD is bound to keep His promise if you fulfil the conditions, and in every case you will have what you *need*.

Resolution. To go to my Friend with every want.

Spiritual Bouquet. "You ask and receive not because you ask amiss" (St. James iv. 3).

ELIAS AND ELISEUS

Rogation Wednesday. Ascension Eve.

"*Ascending on high He led captivity captive; He* gave gifts *to men*" (from the "Epistle," Eph. iv. 8).

1*st Prelude.* Elias going up by a whirlwind into Heaven, while Eliseus cries: My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the driver thereof.

2*nd Prelude.* Grace not to leave my Elias to-day.

To-day we say our Rogation Litany for the last time, and we say it with more fervour than ever, as we realise that the time is so short—only "a little while"—before our Master will be taken from us, and we want to secure some of the *gifts* which He has had from the Father to distribute amongst men before He goes. As I meditate on the story of the prophet who "went up by a whirlwind into Heaven," I will hear the voice of my great Elias saying to me: "Ask what *thou* wilt have Me to do for *thee* before I be taken away from thee" (4 Kings ii. 9).

Point I.—"I will not Leave Thee"

Elias' work was done; it was his last day on earth, and he was at Gilgal with his disciple and successor, Eliseus. The students in the Schools of the Prophets all seem to have known that it was his last day; and Eliseus knew it too, and he was determined not to leave him. Elias tried to make him stay behind in Gilgal while he went on to Bethel, whither God had sent him. But Eliseus was most emphatic:

"As the Lord liveth and as thy soul liveth *I will not leave thee.*" When they got to Bethel Elias found that the Lord was sending him to Jericho, and at Jericho he said: The Lord hath sent me as far as the Jordan. In each place the same thing happened —in answer to Elias': "Stay here, I pray thee," came the answer: "*I will not leave thee.*" "And they two went on together."

And I will say the same to my Elias to-day. The time is so short, and last words and instructions are so precious; besides, I am sure to think of something I want to ask or to say. No, I will not "stay" anywhere except where Thou art. If I lose Thee it shall not be by my own fault or through any want of fidelity. I will not leave Thee, and even if Thy sensible presence is withdrawn I shall know that Thou art not far. It is those who keep the closest to Thee who will get Thy blessing to-day. "As the Lord liveth, and as my Lord the King liveth, in what place soever Thou shalt be, my Lord, O King, either in death or in life, there will Thy servant be" (2 Kings xv. 21).

Point II.—"Dost Thou Know that this Day the Lord will take away Thy Master from Thee?"

So ask the Sons of the Prophets both at Bethel and at Jericho. Dost thou know? Yea, I know it, He told me Himself. "A little while and you shall see Me," and then "I go to the Father" (St. John xvi. 17). He spoke quite plainly: "I leave the world and I go to the Father" (vers. 28, 29). He warned me that times of desolation would come when it would seem as if He had forsaken and forgotten me; when all would seem to be going wrong, and my Friend would no longer be at hand. He prepared me for this so that I might make the best use of my times of consolation, when I still have His

sensible presence. Ask *now*, He said, before I be taken away, and then, when I am gone, you will have all you need.

"*Hold your peace*," then, all who would turn my thoughts from JESUS to-day; be still, all wandering thoughts, all distractions. One thing alone shall absorb my attention—the little while that remains and the necessity for using my opportunities while I have them.

One of the best ways of renewing fervour and fighting against the many things that are ready to disturb the peace of the soul is to take a day—say once a month—and do everything in it as if it were for the last time. I am hearing Mass for the last time. What a reality it at once becomes! How earnestly I claim my share in the great Sacrifice! I receive Holy Communion as my Viaticum. I make my last Meditation. I read my letters and write them for the last time. An opportunity of saying a kind word, of doing an act of charity, of making up a quarrel, perhaps, presents itself for the last time. I take my meals, my recreation, I mix with my friends for the last time. I make my last examination of conscience—perhaps my last Confession. I lie down to sleep penetrated with the thought that it is only a little while—perhaps GOD is saying of me: This night shall thy soul be required of thee. How perfect is my act of Contrition! How fervently do I put myself into the dispositions in which I should wish death to find me. "Ask what thou wilt have Me to do for thee before I be taken from thee." To-day there is time, to-morrow may be too late.

Point III.—"I BESEECH THEE THAT IN ME MAY BE THY DOUBLE SPIRIT"

"They two stood by the Jordan." The Jordan was an obstacle—but only for a moment, to a man

of faith like Elias. No sooner had he struck the waters with his folded mantle than "they were divided hither and thither, and they both passed over on dry ground." Elias is in his own native land now, and where the master is there is the servant. Fifty of the Sons of the Prophets are left behind on the other side of the river. Elias and Eliseus are alone. "Ask what thou wilt have me to do for thee," says the master; and the servant, who has waited for this moment of grace—as we wait for the moment of the Consecration at Mass to present our most urgent petition—has his answer ready: "*I beseech thee that in me may be thy double spirit.*"

This is what I want before Thou leavest me. I have now to carry on Thy work in the world—in myself and in others. I have now to be a part of Thy mystical body by which Thou dost express Thyself to the world. My hands and feet, my lips, my mind, my heart—all have to be used by Thee and for Thee. How can I ever express Thee to others, call Thee to mind by my behaviour, by the things I do and say? There is only one way—I must be imbued with Thy spirit. "*I beseech* Thee, then, that in me may be Thy double spirit." I am so weak and unworthy, and have so very little of my own to depend on, that I am boldly asking for twice as much as Thou dost usually give. It is for Thy work that I need it. (It was surely *humility* which made Eliseus ask for *a double* portion.)

"*Thou hast asked a hard thing*"—not hard for Me to give, but hard for you to receive. To receive My spirit means that the same motives will actuate you which actuated Me—GOD'S glory always put first, His cause espoused whatever the cost. To have My spirit means doing always the things that please My Father. It means adopting My methods of doing His work, being willing to live the kind of life that I lived—a life of poverty, of obscurity, of

self-renunciation, of humiliation, of failure, of suffering; only so can you represent Me to the world. "Can you drink of the chalice that I drink of?"

"*Nevertheless if thou see Me when I am taken up from thee thou shalt have what thou hast asked.*" If you can see Me with the eye of faith when I am no longer at your side, see *Me* in all your desolation, suffering, trial, loneliness, failures, then you shall have what you have asked—you shall have My spirit. This is the test—is your faith strong enough to see Me in your times of desolation as you do in your times of consolation? A little while and you *shall not see Me*, and again a little while and you *shall see Me*. Does your faith make no distinction between the two? Very well, *if* you see Me you shall have My spirit, but if you see Me not, you shall not have it!

Point IV.—Where is now the God of Elias?

The separation has come at last, the fiery horses have parted them both asunder, and Elias has gone up by a whirlwind into Heaven. Eliseus is in his first difficulty; it is a time of desolation so great that he has rent his garment "in two pieces"; he is standing by the waters of Jordan longing to get back to his country and begin his work, but the river lies between it and him. How will he surmount this difficulty? He picks up his master's mantle and strikes the waters with it as he has seen his master do a little while before, *but they are not divided!* There is something wrong—what is it? Is he trusting too much to the mantle, or to his own strength? Or does God want to make him understand that he who receives a double portion must work doubly hard for it—that where Elias struck once, Eliseus must strike twice? Anyway, faith conquers, and at the cry: Where is now the God of Elias? his prayer is heard and the difficulty

removed, and he meets again the Sons of the Prophets, who greet him with the consoling and encouraging words: "The spirit of Elias hath rested upon Eliseus."

So will the cry of faith ever clothe me with the spirit of my Elias, and the difficulties will disappear, and men will "take knowledge of me that I have been with JESUS," because the spirit of the Master rests on the disciple.

Colloquy with JESUS—a last colloquy, while I tell Him what I want before He is taken from me.

Resolution. Not to be afraid to ask largely—even for "a hard thing"—to-day.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Ask what thou wilt have Me to do for thee before I be taken away from thee."

ASCENDIT AD CŒLOS

Ascension Day.

"*Whilst He blessed them, He departed from them . . . and a cloud received Him out of their sight*" (St. Luke xxiv. 51; Acts i. 9).

"*Lift up your gates, O ye princes . . . and the King of Glory shall come in*" (Ps. xxiii. 7).

1*st Prelude.* The Paschal Candle—symbol of JESUS' visible presence—being extinguished at Mass.

2*nd Prelude.* Grace to realise Heaven while kissing His footprints on earth.

Point I.—EARTH

IT is over—the parting has come. He had appeared to them in the Cenacle—had sat down to table and eaten with them as their dear familiar Friend. He had spoken of their incredulity once again, and had upbraided them for it. (Our JESUS knows too well the value of humiliations to shield His friends from them.) He had told them to go into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He had given them the power to work miracles that men might know that their mission was divine. Then He had led them out as far as Bethania, to Mount Olivet, outside the city; and as they walked they had ventured to ask: "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" and He had sternly turned their minds away from their own nation by telling them they were to be witnesses unto Him not only to Israel, but also "to the uttermost part of the earth." He had once again assured them that He would not

forget to send them the promise of His Father. He had given them His parting injunction: "Stay in the city till you be endued with power from on high."

Now the last moment has come—He is surrounded by His little flock, and, lifting up His Hands—His pierced Hands—He blesses them, and whilst He is in the act of blessing, He is carried up into Heaven!

"It is *expedient* for you"—it is only for "a little while." He hides His Face; it is but for a moment. "I sought Him and found Him not" (Cant. v. 6). Desolation is often "expedient" though the parting is only one in appearance. "Without Me you can do nothing," so He *must* be with us, though hidden from our senses. Sorrow is only for the night—joy will come in the morning, and the consolation will be all the sweeter for the desolation.

"*Whilst He blessed them.*" It was His last act—a picture which could never be effaced from their minds—the pierced Hands outstretched to bless; and they are outstretched still. Through His Church and His Priests that silent blessing is still given—oh, so often! Do I remember, as I receive it, that the hand raised to bless is really the pierced Hand of my Lord giving me His blessing? It was one of His many parting *gifts* to His Church—the power to bless in His Name. "GOD is in the midst of us, He shall bless us." "The blessing of the Lord be upon you. We have blessed you in the Name of the Lord" (Ps. cxxviii. 8).

"*A cloud received Him*" and hid Him from their sight, as it did on Mount Thabor; but He is there all the time behind the cloud, waiting for the time when He shall "come again with the clouds and every eye shall see Him" (Apoc. i. 7).

Let us learn to love the clouds where JESUS hides Himself—even to hail them as signs of His nearness to us, as Israel did of old when "the Lord went before them to show the way in a pillar of a cloud"

(Ex. xiii. 21). Our God is ever a God Who hides Himself. He hid His Divinity under His Humanity, and He hides both under the appearance of bread and wine in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. He hides Himself under the difficulties and hardships, the weaknesses, the constant thwartings and humiliations in my life. Is my faith strong enough to believe that all these are the clouds in which my Jesus is hidden? He *could* disperse the clouds and fill me with the sunlight of His Presence—He *could* remove all my difficulties. If He does not do so, except at rare intervals, it is because He counts on my faith being strong. Surely I shall not disappoint Him, but shall say with holy Job: "If I turn myself I shall not see Him, but He knoweth my way and has tried me as gold that passeth through the fire" (Job xxiii. 9, 10).

Point II.—Heaven

"Be ye lifted up, O eternal gates, and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is the King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, the Lord mighty in battle. He is the King of glory" (Ps. xxiii. 7–10), and He is our Jesus. For a few minutes let the eye of faith pierce the cloud and see the other side of the picture. "Lift up your gates, O ye Princes," the supreme moment is come. He Whom you have worshipped and attended in secret for the last thirty-three years is coming home again to receive all the homage that highest Heaven can give. The Conqueror is returning from His battles, and with Him, as trophies, He is bringing the Holy Souls who have been waiting for this day in Limbo ever since the time of our first parents—a countless host—the first to fill the Angels' vacant places. The God-Man is bringing our human nature to the highest place in Heaven, even to that at the Right Hand of God. Oh, what joy there is in Heaven to-day!

What joy to see that beautiful, glorified human Body, with its glorious scars telling of battles fought and won, telling of the plan of Redemption accomplished, and exciting an endless chorus of praise and thanksgiving! It is all joy—the King of glory, the Lord mighty in battle enters His Kingdom, leading captivity captive, and opening the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers.

What have I to do with it all—I who am kissing the footprints that His Feet have left on earth? May I share the joy? Oh yes, for it is all for me. The human nature that He took is my nature; the battle, the victory, the scars, the Ascension, the triumph, the sitting on His Throne—all these are of the deepest interest to me, for I have a share in each. He is sitting at the Right Hand of GOD the Father because He has gained the victory for me, and also to plead for me, that where He is I may be too.

But first there is Angels' work for me to do on earth. "Lift up your gates"—the gates of contrition, of desire, of faith and love, and the King of glory will surely come in; for each time that I receive Holy Communion I receive this same JESUS, Who ascended into Heaven. The King Who occupies the highest throne in Heaven chooses also my heart for His throne. Let me try to give Him something of the welcome that Heaven gave Him on this joyous day of His Ascension. Let me think of the joy and desire of the Angels—those mighty Princes, who were so proud to lift up their gates and let Him in. Yet I possess Him in a way that no Angel ever did. Am I lifting up my gates to receive Him? What is my *desire* as the moment approaches for me to receive the King of kings? With what *love* do I expect Him? Is it with heartfelt *contrition* again and again renewed? These are the only gates through which the King of glory can pass into my soul. Let me lift them up high

that He may come in and make my heart His Heaven.

Colloquy with JESUS passing through the eternal gates to His Throne in Heaven.

Resolution. To lift up the gates of my heart so that He may have no difficulty in passing to His throne on earth.

Spiritual Bouquet. Sursum corda. Lift up your hearts.

WHY JESUS ASCENDED

Friday within the Octave of the Ascension.

"*I tell you the truth: it is expedient to you that I go. For if I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you: but if I go I will send Him to you*" (St. John xvi. 7).

1*st Prelude.* Jesus saying these words to His Apostles.
2*nd Prelude.* Grace to understand them.

Our Lord knew that sorrow was filling the hearts (St. John xvi. 6) of His Apostles while He talked to them of His departure; and for their consolation He told them very plainly that it was expedient for them that He should go. Let me meditate on some of the reasons which made the Ascension expedient for the Apostles—and for me.

Point I.—"If I go not the Paraclete will not come"

And it was essential that He *should* come. The Church had been founded; the directions all given; the Sacraments had been instituted; the first Priests had been ordained and had received power to continue the Founder's work in His Name; all was in perfect order, all was ready—the great engine which was to set the whole world in motion was built. But one thing was lacking—the motive power. All was still, silent, inactive. Why? Because the Master had said: *Wait*—"wait till ye be endued with power from on high." Then, when the power comes, when the Holy Spirit, Who fills all with His

breath, has permeated every part of the vast machinery, setting every little wheel in action; then, and not till then, will there be any *motive* power; then, and not till then, can you begin My work on earth; then, and not till then, can you "go and teach all nations." You possess the power of Order, but, till the Holy Spirit comes, you have no authority to use that power. How expedient then is it for you that I go, "for if I go not the Paraclete will not come," and My life and death will have been in vain—"but if I go I will send Him to you."

Most expedient is it for each of you individually, and for each member of My Church throughout all time, that I should send the Paraclete, for "He will abide with you for ever." "He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind whatsoever I shall have said to you" (chap. xiv. 26). "He will convince the world of sin and of justice and of judgment" (chap. xvi. 8). He is necessary for the individual sanctification of each member of My Church, and "*if I go not, He will not come to you.*"

I ascend on high that I may give *gifts* to men. I cannot do it without the agency of the Holy Spirit, for He it is Who "shall receive of Mine and shall show it to you" (chap. xvi. 14). Yes, "it is expedient to you that I go."

Point II.—I go to Plead My Wounds

It is expedient for you that I go, because I go to begin My work in Heaven as your Saviour, to show My glorious scars to My Father and to all the company of Heaven as proofs of My victory over My enemies, and as a pledge of your victory too. I want you never to feel that the temptations and trials are too great for you—that the battle is too hard, but to remember always that your Captain is in Heaven, where all the little battles on earth are carefully noticed and registered, and for each of

which I am pleading My wounds, saying: Those enemies that are attacking My child are *My* enemies, and these scars are a proof that they have been conquered. Remember this the next time you are face to face with any enemy who seems too strong for you, and remember that your Captain's scars make the victory sure in the long run, even though some of the battles may be lost.

"I ascend to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God" (St. John xx. 17). It is expedient for you that I go, because My going will strengthen the links between earth and Heaven. I, your Saviour and your Friend, will be there at the Right Hand of My Father and your Father, to remind Him that you are His children, because I have died for you; to remind Him that you have a right to call Him Father, because I, your Elder Brother, have given you the right. And so, when your poor little acts and feeble prayers rise to Heaven, I shall be there to say to your Father and Mine: Yes, I know they are very imperfect, but they are *united to Mine*, they are touched with My Blood and My merits; and our Father will be satisfied. Holy and just though He is, He can find no flaw in your acts and prayers—they are stamped with the hall-mark. But remember, My child, it is only those acts and prayers that are united to Mine, and have touched My wounds, that I can thus make valid, and it is *you* who must unite them; so be very careful about your intention—very careful not to be independent, for "without Me you can do nothing." If I am to plead My wounds in Heaven, you must pass everything through them on earth.

Point III.—I go to Prepare a Place for You

"In My Father's house there are many mansions" (St. John xiv. 1). There is one there for you, and I must go and prepare it. I am making

all as easy for you as I can—I have shown you the way, I am sending the Holy Spirit to prepare you for your place by sanctifying you, by guiding you into all truth, and by saying to you: "*This* is the way, walk ye in it; and go not aside neither to the right hand nor to the left" (Isaias xxx. 21). Think often of your place in Heaven which I am preparing for you—a place that is *meant* for you, your home to come and rest in, when all the battles are over and the victory is yours too. It was I Who earned the place for you; it would never have been yours had I not gone down and fought the great fight for you. When I returned victorious I asked for a place for *you*. Now you have to do your part bravely—fill up those things that are wanting of My sufferings (Col. i. 24)—things that I have left on purpose for you—and when you have "fought a good fight" "I will come again and will take you to Myself, that where I am you also may be" (St. John xiv. 3). It is expedient for you that I go and prepare a place for you.

Point IV.—I am with You all Days

And yet He had said: "Me you have not always with you" (St. Matt. xxvi. 11). It is in trying to see what the Master means by these two apparently contradictory statements that we shall find another reason why it is expedient for us that He should go. Earth is not the home of the glorified body, therefore you cannot have Me always with you under the form of My glorified Body, that is, under My proper species, but "I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you" (St. John xiv. 18–20) in another form, under the *Sacramental species*, and thus I shall be with you all days, and in all places, even to the consummation of the world.

It was expedient, then, that His glorified Body should stay no longer on earth, because—

(1) He wanted His Church to live by *faith*, as it has done during nineteen centuries, not by sight, as it did during the forty days in which He might at any time appear. "He that *believeth* on Me, the works that I do he also shall do, and greater than these shall he do," through the Blessed Sacrament, and it is all "because I go to the Father" (chap. xiv. 12, 14). The reign of faith could not begin till His visible presence was withdrawn.

(2) He wanted all men, in every place, in every age, to be able to approach Him, not just the favoured few to whom He showed Himself; and this was only possible through the Blessed Sacrament.

(3) He wanted the love and union between Himself and each member of His Church to be closer and more intimate than it ever had been. He wanted to be able to say, not: "Touch Me not," but: "He that eateth Me the same also shall live by Me" (St. John vi. 58). He wanted to transform us into Himself by making us partakers of His Divinity, even as He had made Himself a partaker of our humanity. And so He chose to remain on earth under the form of a little Host rather than under the form of His glorified Body. Was it not expedient for us that He should go?

Colloquy with JESUS, Who is telling me over again why He ascended.

Resolution. To think often to-day of my place in Heaven, from which I shall one day see JESUS sitting at the Right Hand of GOD.

Spiritual Bouquet. "If you loved Me you would indeed be glad because I go to the Father" (St. John xiv. 28).

"WHY STAND YOU LOOKING UP?"

Saturday within the Octave of the Ascension.

"*Ye men of Galilee, why stand you looking up to Heaven? This JESUS Who is taken up from you into Heaven shall so come as you have seen Him going into Heaven*" (Acts i. 11).

1*st Prelude.* The cloud which "received Him out of their sight"; the Apostles looking up at it; and the two men in white garments standing by.

2*nd Prelude.* Grace to obey the heavenly messengers.

Point I.—"WHY STAND YOU LOOKING UP TO HEAVEN?"

BECAUSE I have seen Him Whom I love go there; because from henceforth all my thoughts will be there; Heaven contains all that I hold most dear—my Teacher, my Friend, my Confessor, my Great High Priest, my Saviour, my Beloved. Earth is a blank; I cannot face it without Him; at every turn I shall want Him. He is in Heaven, I upon earth, so I stand looking up at the cloud that received Him, in case, by any chance, Heaven may re-open and give me back "Him Whom my soul loveth."

Heaven *will* re-open, and there will be a reunion between you and your Beloved, but it will not be brought about by your standing still and looking up. Your treasure is there, your citizenship is there; and it is true you must set your mind and your affections on "the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth" (Col. iii. 2),

but the heavenly treasures can only be earned by carrying out the Master's directions on earth. He left you something to do, and it is in doing it that you will find Him again. Think of all the many instructions He gave you; they have all to be obeyed; there is no time to be lost; set to work at once. What is the last thing He told you to do? To go to Jerusalem and wait there for the promise of the Father.

So say the heavenly messengers.

Point II.—Then they Returned to Jerusalem

It was not easy. Mount Olivet seemed to them just now the dearest spot on earth, and they would fain have stopped there. But these "two men in white garments" were messengers from the Master; it was evident that directly He had reached Heaven He had thought of His disciples, left lonely and desolate. Almost as soon as He had gone, while they were yet gazing up to see whether it was really true, His *gifts* had begun to descend upon them. This visit of the angels must have made the Apostles realise that He had not really left them. Already they were listening to words of counsel and consolation which He Himself had sent them.

"Then they returned to Jerusalem"—returned to all that was going to fit them to rejoin their Master one day. Not yet were they ready for their recompense. They must return to the old difficulties and temptations and trials. They must return to the work that the Master had given them to do, and to the place where He had bidden them wait.

Only so can we get consolation in our land of exile; only so can we keep close to our Master; only so can we form fresh links between earth and Heaven; only so can we prepare ourselves for the place He has gone to make ready for us, and only so can we prove our love for Him Who has been taken

from us into Heaven. Let us then be up and doing, and while the eye of faith is gazing on our Home, with all its treasures, let us be carrying out faithfully all the instructions our Master has left us. Then when each can say, like his Master: "I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do" (St. John xvii. 4), when all the stones have been cut and shaped and prepared in earth's quarries and in the furnace of Purgatory, then this same JESUS will come again, and put each living stone into its place in the Heavenly Temple, where it will "go out no more" (Apoc. iii. 12), where it will never again be separated from the Chief Corner-stone, elect and precious, for they that believe in Him shall not be confounded (1 Pet. ii. 6).

Colloquy with JESUS ascended, Who tells me that He loves me to be "looking up into Heaven"; that He wants me never to forget that my treasure is there and that Heaven is my Home; that He wants me to "seek the things that are above"; but that, while my thoughts and my heart are fixed there, He wants me to be treading faithfully each step of the journey which leads there and which He has Himself mapped out for me.

Resolution. To "*strive* to enter in."

Spiritual Bouquet. "Why stand you looking up to Heaven?"

VENI CREATOR SPIRITUS (1)

Sunday within the Octave of the Ascension.

[1] Veni Creator Spiritus	Come, O Creator Spirit, visit
Mentes tuorum visita,	our souls; and with Thy
Imple superna gratia,	heavenly grace fill the hearts
Quæ Tu creasti pectora.	that were made by Thee.

1*st Prelude.* A place in the Cenacle close to Mary, who will teach me how to wait.

2*nd Prelude.* Grace to say my *Veni Creator* well.

Point I.—The Gift of Joy

They had all arrived now from Mount Olivet, even those that had lingered behind, unwilling to tear themselves from the loved spot. It seems probable that Mary, after kissing the holy footprints, had left at once; and that, with Peter and John and the rest, she was awaiting the arrival of the others (Acts i. 13, 14). "If you loved Me you would rejoice." Mary loved Him and she was rejoicing—rejoicing in the triumph of her Son. They all quickly caught the spirit of joy, for St. Luke tells us: "They went back into Jerusalem with great joy" (chap. xxiv. 52). One of the Master's first *gifts* after He ascended was, as He promised, the gift of

[1] The *Veni Creator* is used in the Terce of Whitsuntide, instead of the usual Hymn. It was written in the ninth century, and is ascribed by tradition to Charlemagne. In churches where Terce is not sung, the custom has arisen of singing the *Veni Creator* before Mass on Whit Sunday.

joy. "Your sorrow shall be turned into joy . . . your heart shall rejoice. And your joy no man shall take from you" (St. John xvi. 20–22). To rejoice had seemed so impossible when He said those words, and yet now it seemed the most natural thing—the only thing to do. The gift of joy had transformed them—had altered the aspect of everything. It was Christ's gift, it came from Heaven, and it was supernatural. "Not as the world giveth, do I give unto you" (chap. xiv. 27). Now they see things from His point of view, and they rejoice in His joy. With joy they go back to the city, with joy they carry out His commands, with joy they gather round Mary and wait for the Holy Spirit.

And it is in this same spirit (for the gift is mine too) that I must wait and watch and pray this week—a spirit of joy and praise and thanksgiving for all the great things He has done for me; and for all the great things that I am expecting Him to do.

Point II.—Come, Creator Spirit

One idea now fills all minds—"You shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts i. 5). Their minds and hearts are already in Heaven where their Master is, and where the Holy Ghost is Who is coming, and nothing is more natural than that *Veni Creator* should be on the lips and in the heart of each. Directed by "Mary the Mother of Jesus," to whom they all look up as being better able than any one to interpret the mind of her Son, they "persevere with one mind in prayer" (ver. 14), praying for the promised gift and begging the Holy Spirit to come.

Come, Creator Spirit. We know so well Who Thou art. Thou art no stranger to us. Thou it was Who in the beginning didst move over this earth of ours, bringing order and light out of chaos and

darkness, and Thy secret influence has been at work ever since. Thou it was Who didst overshadow Mary and make her Thine own spouse. Thou it was Who, in the form of a dove, didst rest upon her Son while He stood in the baptismal waters and the Voice of the Father was heard proclaiming Who He was. It is Thou of Whom we have heard so much from our Master during these last few days. We want Thee now for ourselves; we want to begin the work which our Master has left us to do; we want to receive all the wonderful things which He has promised us through Thy agency. We want nothing so much as that Thou shouldst come to us. The Master said we should not have to wait long. Oh, come, Creator Spirit, to Thy children, who are longing for Thee!

Point III.—Visit the Souls Thou hast Created

Mary is reminding me that I know Him too, that I am one of the souls whom He has created, that He is no stranger to me either, that I have come to the Cenacle to pray and wait for a visit from One Who is my Friend and my greatest Benefactor. He it is Whose gentle breath gave spiritual life to my soul at Baptism; He it is Who, at my Confirmation, came to make His own the temple He had thus dedicated, by coming to dwell in it with all His sevenfold grace. He it is Who, by His gentle though forcible inspirations, has brought me safely along paths which have been perhaps tortuous and difficult, and shown me just where and how He would have me fulfil my end. Or it may be that He has *not* yet shown me definitely and clearly what He would have me do—not yet thrown the light upon my path—but I am not the less under His guidance. "He knoweth the way that I take"—that is enough,

and when I have been tempted to stray out of it, my ears have heard His admonishing voice saying: "This is the way, walk ye in it, and go not aside neither to the right hand nor to the left" (Isaias xxx. 21). Yes, well do I know Him. It is no stranger that I have come to wait for, but One Who has already given me all I possess that is worth having. Help me, my Mother, to make a good preparation for His visit, by "persevering with one mind in prayer," with thee and with the Church.

Point IV.—And Fill them with Heavenly Grace

What can I ask of Him Who has already done so much for me, and Who knows my needs so well? If He will only come, all will be well. He will know what there is most need of in His temple; so I will leave the choice of any particular grace to Him. I will just bring my little vessel and put it by Mary's big one, and ask Him to *fill* it. I will humbly confess to Him that the reason it never is full rests with me—it is due to my negligence and want of fidelity. I spill so much of the precious grace; I let pass so many opportunities; there are so many inspirations that I pretend not to notice. O Creator Spirit, come and fill me with Thy grace. This week, as the best preparation I can make while I am waiting, I will try to be faithful to every inspiration of Thine; for Thou dost ever give "grace for grace" (St. John i. 16).

Colloquy. "Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty and merciful God, that the Holy Ghost may come and mercifully dwell with us, so as to perfect

us as a temple of His glory" ("Collect" for Wednesday in Whitsun Week).

Resolution. To be faithful to-day to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit.

Spiritual Bouquet. Come, Creator Spirit. . . . Visit . . . Fill!

VENI CREATOR SPIRITUS (2)

Monday within the Octave of the Ascension.

Qui diceris Paraclitus, Altissimi donum Dei, Fons vivus, ignis, caritas Et spiritalis unctio.	Thou art called the Paraclete, the Gift of the most high GOD, the living Fountain, Fire, Love and spiritual Unction.

1*st Prelude.* In the Cenacle, at Mary's feet.
2*nd Prelude.* The grace to learn more from her about the Holy Spirit.

Point I.—THE GIFT OF THE PARACLETE

"I WILL ask the Father and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for ever" (St. John xiv. 16). *Another*—till now He had Himself been their Paraclete; but when it became expedient for Him to remove His visible presence from the earth, He said that He would send another, and that they were to regard Him as a *gift* from the Father, that the Paraclete would never leave them, that His reign, which was soon to begin on the earth, would last until His own visible presence was seen again, even to the day when He should come with the clouds and every eye should see Him (Apoc. i. 7). The Holy Spirit, then, is the gift of the same GOD Who "so loved the world as to *give* His only begotten Son" (St. John iii. 16). "The Father Himself loveth us," and we are within our rights when we come to ask for the promised gift.

Having thanked JESUS for asking the Father to send the Paraclete, and having thanked the Father

for the promise of such an ineffable gift, let us turn to the Holy Ghost Himself, and continue our *Veni Creator*. We apply to Him some of the names and attributes by which He is known, each one affording an individual reason for our wanting Him to come and expecting much from Him when He does come.

Thou art called the Paraclete. It was the Master Himself Who gave Him this name. (1) It means a *Comforter*, One whose consolation brings a fresh supply of courage and strength. This was just what the Apostles needed—consoling, because they had lost their Master, and encouraging and strengthening to do the difficult work which He had left them to do. And it is what I need too; and one of the reasons why Mary has brought me into the Cenacle this week to say my *Veni Creator* is that she has noticed that I am a little disposed to lose heart, to complain because He has taken away from me some valued and seemingly necessary help, to say my task is too hard for me, the difficulties more than I can bear. *A Comforter.* Is not that just what I need? Did not JESUS know just what I wanted when He promised another Paraclete, Who should abide with us *for ever*—for all time? He was not to be only for the Apostles, then, but for me. O come, great Paraclete, and be my Comforter. Give me the strength and courage that I need to do the work the Master has given me to do.

(2) But the word means more than Comforter, it means also an *Advocate.* He will not only give me strength to do my work, but will actually help me with it—help me by pleading for me and praying in me: "The Spirit also *helpeth* our infirmity" (Rom. viii. 26). The Greek word used for *helpeth* means that He takes hold on the other side; the burden is too heavy, it is quite true, for me alone, but He comes and adds His efforts to mine. He

works with me, strengthening the weak parts. As my *Advocate*, again, He will not only teach me how to pray, by praying in me, but He will *plead* for me: "The Spirit Himself asketh for us with unspeakable groanings." Come, then, Thou Heavenly Paraclete, and begin again Thy holy work in me. I need Thy "unspeakable groanings." I need One Who will plead *in* me and *for* me, for my infidelities are more than "the hairs of my head, and my heart hath forsaken me" (Ps. xxxix. 13).

Point II.—Some more of the Holy Spirit's Attributes

(1) *The Living Fountain.* Again it was the Master Himself Who gave us this idea of the Holy Spirit. He spoke to the woman of Samaria of a "fountain of water springing up unto life everlasting" (St. John iv. 14). He spoke to the people once about "rivers of living water." St. John's comment on these words is: "This He said of the *Spirit* which they should receive who believed in Him, for as yet the Spirit was not given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (chap. vii. 39). Now Jesus *is* glorified, and the Apostles are praying and waiting for the Spirit to be given, and I, as I wait and pray and meditate, think of Him as the living and life-giving Fountain, Who gave me my spiritual life, and Who has so often renewed it by the application of the Precious Blood, cleansing away the stains that have defiled it.

(2) *Fire.* The Holy Spirit is called a fire because His action on hearts is like that of fire on the various substances with which it comes in contact. He melts hard hearts; He softens rebellious, wayward hearts; He warms cold hearts; He makes lukewarm and fearful hearts burn as He whispers of zeal

and fervour and courage; He kindles a fresh light in desponding and desolate hearts; He purges away the dross from loving, true and faithful hearts that they may be all gold. O come, Creator Spirit, and kindle in our hearts the fire of Thy love. *Fove quod est frigidum.*

(3) *Love.* Kindle within us the fire of Thy love. He is Himself love. It is as love that He proceeds from the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is the bond of union between the Father and the Son, and the bond is *love.* He is love essential, uncreated. He is the fount and source of love. And the first of the *fruits* of the Spirit is love. So I am asking Him to come under the sweet name of love, for I want love to be shed abroad in my heart—(*a*) a love for God so strong that I love His will better than my own, His plans better than my plans, His interests better than my interests; (*b*) a love for my neighbour—a love great enough to make me prefer him to myself—*prefer* that he should succeed, though his success means my failure, that he should hold the position that I covet and have been striving after; *prefer* that attention and praise should be bestowed upon him, while I am left in the background; *prefer* that his capability should fit him for all sorts of duties of which I know I shall never be capable. The more I dwell upon it, the more I see that this love is wholly *super*natural. Come, then, Creator Spirit, and kindle in my poor, shrinking heart the fire of Thy love, and make me love God so much that I love my neighbour *as* myself.

(4) *Spiritual Unction.* "Let the unction which you have received from Him abide in you. . . . His unction teacheth you of all things" (1 John ii. 27). Come, Thou Creator Spirit, with Thy sweet, gentle, strengthening influence, come and *abide* in me; make me supple to Thy least inspiration, quick to learn whatever Thou wouldst teach, and strong to run in the way of Thy commandments.

Colloquy. "Grant, we beseech Thee, O Almighty God, that we who celebrate the solemnity of the gift of the Holy Spirit, being inflamed with Heavenly desires, may thirst after the Fountain of life" (Prayer for the blessing of the Font on Whitsun Eve).

Resolution. To keep near Mary all day, that she may continually remind me of the Holy Spirit.

Spiritual Bouquet. "He shall give you another Paraclete."

VENI CREATOR SPIRITUS (3)

Tuesday within the Octave of the Ascension.

Tu septiformis munere, Digitus Paternæ dexteræ, Tu rite promissum Patris, Sermone ditans guttura.	Thou art sevenfold in Thy gifts; the Finger of the Father's Right Hand; the Father's solemn promise, that enrichest with the gift of tongues.

1*st Prelude.* My place in the Cenacle.

2*nd Prelude.* Grace to understand, from the richness of the Holy Spirit's gifts, what my poverty is.

Point I.—The Sevenfold Gifts

The prophet Isaias tells us what these seven gifts are: "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him; the spirit of wisdom and of understanding; the spirit of counsel and of fortitude; the spirit of knowledge and of godliness; and he shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord" (Isaias xi. 2, 3). The number *seven* stands for perfection. The Holy Spirit's gifts are not only perfect in themselves, but the effects they produce are all that is necessary for the sanctification of a soul that is tending towards perfection. By them the soul is perfectly equipped for the battle of life, and is enabled to fulfil its end. They are infused into the soul at Baptism, when the Holy Spirit comes to give it *life;* they are increased at Confirmation, when He pays another special visit to the soul to enable it to *grow* in grace; and they are always there (unless

the Holy Spirit is deliberately quenched) for the soul to use when it will, by means of the actual graces it receives.

Come, then, Creator Spirit, come with all Thy sevenfold gifts once more into my heart. I have often lost them; often had them restored by the Sacrament of Penance; seldom have I made use of them as I might. They are a wondrous treasure hidden in my soul which, in my times of need, I might draw upon, if only my will were stronger. It is long perhaps, since Thou didst come to me at Confirmation, with all the fulness of Thy gifts, to equip me for my struggle for perfection; longer still since Thou didst infuse Thy gifts into my soul as little seeds to lie dormant till I had the spiritual sense to use them; and yet I have gone such a short way along the road to perfection—all my time seems to be spent in beginning again. Oh, come and renew Thy gifts within me, and help me to make one more good start!

Point II.—Finger of the Father's Right Hand

Think of all that a father's hand means to a child —strength, protection, guidance, direction, tenderness, warning, correction. How secure a child feels when the strong hand of his father holds him up! How safe when his father's hand protects him and warns off any threatening danger! How sure that the way is right if it has been pointed out by his father! What notice he takes if it is his father's hand that is held up in warning! How happy when his father's hand is laid caressingly on his head! How sad when he feels the weight of it in correction! All this my Heavenly Father's Hand is to me. It is my *strength*, for "Thy Right Hand hath held me up" (Ps. xvii. 36); it is my *protection*, for He says: "I will protect thee with My Right Hand" (Ex. xxxiii. 22), and "no man shall pluck you out of

My Hand" (St. John x. 28); it is my *direction*, pointing out the way when I am in doubt: "This is the way . . . go not aside" (Isaias xxx. 21). "His Right Hand shall embrace me" (Cant. ii. 6) as a sign of *love;* and when, as a further sign of His love, He *chastises*, it is still His Hand that is "heavy upon me" (Ps. xxxi. 4). And the *Finger* of the Father's Right Hand is the Holy Spirit—that is to say, the Father does all this for His child through the agency of the Holy Spirit. He is the expression of the Father's will. He it is Who points out the way so clearly that even "fools shall not err therein" (Isaias xxxv. 8). He it is Who, according to the promise, has always guided the Church into all truth. He it is Who brings to our remembrance the words that JESUS has said, pointing them out with His Divine Finger.

O come, Creator Spirit. It is *for me* that Thou art the Finger of GOD's Right Hand; come and direct, teach and guide Thy child; come and point out all that is displeasing to Thee, putting Thy Finger on each weak spot.

Point III.—ENRICHING TONGUES WITH SPEECH

Come, O Thou promise of the Father, come, fulfil the promise, and teach us all things. I do not need the gift of tongues as the Apostles needed it, but I do want my tongue to be touched with the Divine fire, if I am to use it for GOD's glory and for the work the Master has left me to do. Give me a learned tongue, that I may "know how to uphold *by word* him that is weary" (Isaias l. 4). A word spoken in season, how good is it (Prov. xv. 23). Give me this word in season for all whom Thou dost send to me for sympathy or help. "The tongue of the wise adorneth knowledge" (Prov. xv. 2). Grant that I may be ever truly wise—that my tongue may speak of Thy righteousness (Ps. xxxiv. 28). Give

me the soft tongue that breaks hardness (Prov. xxv. 15). May "the law of clemency" be ever on my tongue (chap. xxxi. 26). May my speech be "always in grace; seasoned with salt," that I may know how I "ought to answer every man" (Col. iv. 6). "The tongue is a fire" (St. James iii. 6), but if it is enriched by Thee with speech, what a source of good it will be! I know that I shall be judged for all my idle, frivolous, useless, unkind, untrue words. I know also that I shall be judged for letting my tongue speak when it ought to be silent. Come, O Creator Spirit, and enrich my speech with Thy grace, that I may ever be Thy mouthpiece to others.

Colloquy with Mary, who so loved silence, and whose words were so rare and so golden.

Resolution. To be on the look-out for the pointing Finger to-day.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Let your speech be always in grace."

VENI CREATOR SPIRITUS (4)

Wednesday within the Octave of the Ascension.

Accende lumen sensibus, Infunde amorem cordibus, Infirma nostri corporis Virtute firmans perpeti.	Enkindle Thy light in our senses, infuse Thy love into our hearts, and strengthen the weak things of our body by Thy perpetual strength.

1st Prelude. With Mary in the Cenacle.
2nd Prelude. Grace of illumination, love and strength.

Point I.—Illumination for our Senses

Our spiritual senses need to be enlightened by the Holy Spirit. We are *blind* to our own state, unless He opens our eyes—blind to the dangers that threaten us, unless He throws light upon our path. We are *deaf* to our own best interests, deaf to the voice of conscience, deaf to all spiritual things, unless He causes our ears to hear; but in the day that He comes "the deaf shall hear the words of the book; and out of darkness and obscurity the eyes of the blind shall see" (Isaias xxix. 18). We *taste* and enjoy the passing things of time, and have no relish for the things that endure, until He comes and says: "Oh, taste and see that the Lord is sweet" (Ps. xxxiii. 9)! We spend all our time and care and affection on the *tangible* things of earth, till He comes and gives His directions about the world: "Touch not, taste not, handle not" (Col. ii. 21). The only *fragrance* we know anything about is that of the earth, earthly, and we make many

sacrifices to obtain it, but when He comes He teaches us about the sacrifice of ourselves, which can be to God an "odour of sweetness" (Eph. v. 2), as was the Sacrifice of His only-begotten Son.

O come, Creator Spirit, come and illuminate my spiritual senses, that they may be keenly alive to all Thy inspirations. Come and make me wholly Thine.

Point II.—Love for our Hearts

Infuse Thy love into our hearts, and then all will be well. It is in the *heart* that the work must be done. We do not want the Holy Spirit to stop at our senses; we want Him to come closer still, even into our hearts, and we ask Him to pour His love into them. Our hearts were made for loving, and they were made for God. "My child, give Me thy heart," is His one request, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," His "greatest and first commandment" (St. Matt. xxii. 38).

Come, then, Creator Spirit, Thou Who art the eternal love of the Father and the Son, come and "kindle in my heart the fire of Thy love." Come and give me this motive force, and then ask what Thou wilt, for nothing is too hard for one who loves. Come, then, with this Thy greatest and best gift (1 Cor. xiii. 13). I have no love in my heart until Thou dost put it there; but if I love I can do all things, for love is stronger than death.

Point III.—Strength for our Bodies

We want our senses to be touched by His grace; we want our hearts to be filled with His love; but our bodies are not to be forgotten. "*Strengthen the weak things of our body with Thy perpetual strength.*" The body is full of weak things, and as it is "the temple of the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. vi. 19)

we feel that He must take a special interest in it. What may I ask the Holy Ghost to do for my body? Surely anything that will make it less unworthy to be His Temple. I may ask Him to calm its passions, not to allow it, by its continual cravings, to be a drag on the soul. I may ask that it may help the soul by the vigour with which it lends itself to GOD'S service; that it may rise to its great dignity and privilege of aiding the salvation of the soul. "Know you not that your *bodies* are the members of Christ?" says St. Paul (1 Cor. vi. 15); and again: "Glorify GOD . . . in your body" (ver. 20). It is going, with the soul, to glorify Him through all eternity; let it begin now. Let it remember that it is "fearfully and wonderfully made," because it is made for GOD—it is His creature. "You are not your own, for you are bought with a great price" (vers. 19 and 20). It is made to be one of Christ's members, made to be a Temple of the Holy Ghost, made to bear GOD Himself (ver. 20), and to be the fulness and completion of the soul's life, natural and supernatural.

I know that my body is *capable* of great things, *intended* for great things and *destined* for great things, but when I come to examine its actual state, I find it full of "weak things," and this is why, O Creator Spirit—Thou Who didst Thyself take my body to be Thine own Temple—I want Thee to come and *strengthen* me. Give me *courage* to keep my body under, and bring it into subjection, as St. Paul did his, lest after all the wondrous plans made to save it, I find myself "a castaway" (1 Cor. ix. 27).

We may ask also, surely, for that measure of health and strength which shall enable the body to do the work that GOD has given it to do; but we shall be very careful to make this request only *for His glory*, not for ourselves, remembering always that it is possible for a body inactive through weak-

ness or suffering to serve God better—that is, to glorify Him more—than one which is always ready for active service. Physical weakness is often strength, for "when I am weak, then am I powerful" (2 Cor. xii. 10).

Come, Creator Spirit, and strengthen the weak things of my body with Thy never-failing strength—whether the strength be for suffering or action, so that Thy Temple may be more worthy of its Divine Indweller.

Colloquy with Mary, whose body was overshadowed by the Holy Ghost.

Resolution. To allow nothing in my senses, heart or body which would grieve the Holy Ghost.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Glorify and bear God in your body" (1 Cor. vi. 20).

VENI CREATOR SPIRITUS (5)

Octave of the Ascension.

Hostem repellas longius, Pacemque dones protinus; Ductore sic Te prævio Vitemus omne noxium.	Repel the enemy far from us, and give us peace continuously; that with Thee as our Guide leading the way, we may avoid everything that is harmful.

1*st Prelude.* With Mary in the Cenacle.
2*nd Prelude.* Grace to take the Holy Spirit as guide.

Point I.—REPEL THE ENEMY FAR FROM US

THE Holy Spirit will drive away the enemy by the very fact that He dwells in us. That the fortress is taken and held by another is sufficient reason for keeping the enemy at a distance. If Satan sees us filled with the Holy Ghost, if he sees that our senses, our hearts and even our bodies are under His guidance and supervision, he knows that his attacks can be of little use. But all the same, he waits his opportunity; he watches carefully for the least little carelessness which may leave a door unfastened, the least little negligence which may give him a loophole, the least little weakness which may have left some spot less well defended than usual. Oh! if my enemy is thus watchful, what ought I to be? It is only when I am full of the Holy Ghost that there is no room for the enemy; it is only when every faculty, every thought, every word, every action is under His direction, that I

am really secure. What, then, am I obliged to say about every lost occasion of grace, about the inspirations of the Holy Ghost that I have passed by and neglected? That each one puts fresh hope into the enemy and makes my fortress less impregnable. Each time that I am unfaithful or negligent in my Communions, in my Meditations, in my Visits to the Blessed Sacrament, in my work, in my dealings with others, I may be quite sure that the enemy advances a little closer.

Come, O Creator Spirit, and drive far away the enemy by filling me with Thy grace; but make me understand that the grace given is always in proportion to the use made of it. "To everyone that hath shall be given" (St. Matt. xxv. 29).

Point II.—Give us Peace continuously

Jesus came to bring us peace. He was continually giving His peace to His Apostles, and when He left the earth, it was amongst the *Gifts* that He bequeathed: "Peace I *leave* with you" (St. John xiv. 27). And now we ask the Holy Spirit to come and give us this peace continuously. It is *peace* we ask for, not rest—peace which comes from the very fact that the soul gives itself no rest; that it is always on the look-out, always actively guarding its fortress, by the daily examination of conscience, by Acts of Contrition, by manifold and inventive industries; sometimes even by going out and attacking the enemy on his own ground, a method which St. Ignatius calls *agendo contra*—acting against the enemy, not being content with warding off his attacks (resisting temptation), nor with guarding the fortress (avoiding occasions), but *taking the initiative.* Suppose, for example, that I am impatient, quickly lose my temper and my self-control, there are three ways of dealing with the enemy in this form. (1) When the tempta-

tion is there I can fight it by trying to keep calm and self-controlled, by trying to keep the enemy out, though he is at my door. (2) By guarding the avenues of attack—that is, by avoiding the occasions, as far as I possibly can, which are likely to arouse my impatience and my temper. (3) And thirdly, by continually practising the opposite virtues of patience and self-control, *acting contrary* to my inclinations, even when there is no special need, keeping a tight hand over myself. This third method is what St. Ignatius calls *agendo contra.* By it we not only preserve ourselves, but we go out to attack the enemy on his own ground, and thus create an air of security, because we know that the enemy is being continually weakened by our attacks. This method of attack can be applied to any other temptation. The soul that is thus continually on the alert will have *peace,* not because it finds everything right and as it should be—no, far from that—but because all the many things that it finds wrong and out of order are repaired at once, and also because to expose oneself voluntarily to hardship and danger in GOD'S service is a sure way of having peace.

Come, then, Creator Spirit, and give me peace, but teach me that if I am to have it *continuously,* it can only be by cultivating a holy restlessness, which makes me feel that I dare not sit still, but that I must be up and doing to assure myself that all is right.

Point III.—THE HOLY SPIRIT OUR GUIDE

"That with Thee as our Guide, leading the way, we may avoid everything that is harmful." This is the secret both of the impregnability of the fortress and of the continual peace. JESUS promised that the Holy Spirit should be our Guide: "He shall teach you. . . . He shall abide with you. . . . He

shall be in you. . . . He shall bring all things to your mind . . . the things that are to come He shall show you. . . . He will convince the world of sin, of justice and of judgment." It is He, then, Who will go with me on my daily rounds; it is the Holy Spirit Himself Who will point out the weak spots; He will go first; I have only to watch His guiding Finger, and I shall avoid everything that is harmful.

O come, Creator Spirit, come and be my Guide; Thou Who knowest so well all the ins and outs of Thine own fortress, show me where it is weak, where it is likely to yield; give me grace to keep close enough to Thee to follow Thy holy indications and to avoid everything that can harm my soul.

Colloquy with Mary. I am so glad to feel that I am close to thee, my Mother, for as the days go on, I think I should be almost frightened to be waiting for the Holy Spirit all alone! The more I meditate upon Him, and the more I want Him, with all His gifts, the more terrible seems to be the responsibility of being the recipient of such gifts. And, on the other hand, I am afraid lest any want of desire and recollection and preparation should deprive me of them. But with my hands in thine I can wait trustfully and calmly, knowing that He Whose spouse thou art will deal gently with one of thy children.

Resolution. To keep very close to Mary all through the day in the Cenacle.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Direct our feet into the way of peace" (St. Luke i. 79).

VENI CREATOR SPIRITUS (6)

Friday after the Octave.

Per Te sciamus da Patrem Noscamus atque Filium, Teque utriusque Spiritum, Credamus omni tempore.	Grant that through Thee we may know the Father, that we may know also the Son, and that through all time we may believe Thee to be the Spirit of them both.
Deo Patri sit gloria, Et Filio, qui a mortuis Surrexit, ac Paraclito In sæculorum sæcula. Amen.	Glory be to GOD the Father, and to the Son Who rose from the dead, and to the Paraclete, for everlasting ages. Amen.

1*st Prelude.* With Mary in the Cenacle.
2*nd Prelude.* An increase of desire and fervour.

Point I.—THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE FATHER AND THE SON

"LORD, show us the Father, and it is enough for us," Philip said once to the Master, and he expressed the wishes of them all. What was the answer? "From henceforth you shall *know* Him, for I will ask the Father and He shall give you another Paraclete" (St. John xiv. 7, 8, 16). It was through the Paraclete that they would know the Father. We, too, want to know Him, and that is one of the reasons why we are waiting in the Cenacle, and asking the Holy Spirit to come and make us know Him. He is the expression of the Father—of all His perfections, above all, of His love. The children want to know their Father, and one of the Holy Spirit's chief works is to declare the Father

to the children, by coming Himself and dwelling in them; by sanctifying their hearts, that they may be perfect, as their Father is perfect; by convincing them that their Father is a just and holy GOD, that sin is abhorrent to Him, and that He cannot look upon iniquity; by shedding abroad the Father's love for them in their hearts, bringing back to their minds the Master's own words: "The Father Himself loveth you."

O come, Creator Spirit, and grant that through Thee we may know the Father.

And just as we shall never know the Father except through the knowledge which the Holy Ghost inspires in us, so also all our knowledge of the Son must come through the same channel. "No man," St. Paul assures us, "can say, the Lord JESUS, but by the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. xii. 3). The Apostles knew Him, and we, to some extent, know Him by the accounts that the Church has preserved for us of His actions and words, but this is not enough. "The *letter* killeth, but the *Spirit* quickeneth" (2 Cor. iii. 6). Our knowledge of JESUS must come through the Holy Spirit, whether it be by means of the inspired words of Holy Writ, or by the words that He writes on the living tablets of our hearts. We want a *personal* knowledge of JESUS that can be applied to our everyday life. He is to be our Model in our pilgrimage through this world. We have got to follow Him, or we shall not be His disciples. How essential, then, is it that we should *know* Him. How can we get this knowledge? By the Holy Spirit dwelling in us and bringing Him to our remembrance, tracing His image so clearly on our hearts that we cannot but know Him. This is the Holy Spirit's work—it is what He wants to do, and it is our own fault if He does not do it.

O come, Creator Spirit, and make me know GOD the Son, that I may follow Him more faithfully and love Him more devotedly.

Point II.—The Knowledge of the Holy Ghost

"That we may believe Thee to be the Spirit of them both"—of both the Father and the Son. Before we can *believe* we must *know*, so now what we ask for is a knowledge of the Holy Ghost. How essential it is that we should know Him through Whom all our spiritual life comes! So we ask first that we may believe the fact that He is the Spirit of the Father and the Son—that it is through Him that they both come to us—that it was through the Holy Spirit's agency that God created us; through His agency that we got our supernatural life; through His agency that the Incarnation took place; through His agency that we are able to receive the Precious Body and Blood of Christ as the Food of our souls, to sustain the life which He has given. We want to believe, and to act as if we believed, that the Holy Spirit is ever proceeding from the Father and the Son, and that it is, therefore, by Him that we are to learn to know them both.

Come, O Creator Spirit, and shed abroad the knowledge of Thyself in my heart. "You shall *know* Him because He shall abide with you and shall be in you" (St. John xiv. 17). This was the promise of Jesus, and I claim it now as I wait for Thee. It is by Thy being my teacher that I shall get to know Thee; and the more Thou dost teach me, the better I shall know Thee. Oh, make me a very attentive scholar. Come not as a stranger, but come and *abide* with me. Thou canst only abide in a home where Thou art Master and canst do all that Thou desirest. Make me supple, yielding, humble, willing to put my own will on one side and follow Thine. O come, Creator Spirit, for Thou hast much to do, come quickly, and begin Thy work in my heart, and abide with me for ever on Thine own terms, till the day comes when I shall know Thee, and the Father and the Son, even as I am known.

Point III.—Praised be the ever-blessed Trinity

Glory be to the Father. Words of praise and thanksgiving rise instinctively from our hearts as we think of God's marvellous plan for the redemption of our souls. Not content with loving us Himself, He gave us His only begotten Son, and now, to make us understand the greatness of the love of the Father and the Son for us, He sends the Holy Spirit, Who *is* the love of the Father and the Son, to manifest that love to us, to dwell in us and reveal to us something of what Divine Love is. "This is the charity of God" (1 St. John v. 3)—of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

Colloquy with Mary, whose knowledge of God as her Father, of Jesus Christ as her Son, and of the Holy Ghost as her Spouse, was so intimate. Pray for me, my Mother, that I may receive such an outpouring of the Holy Spirit that my knowledge, and therefore my love, may be increased.

Resolution. To say the *Veni Creator* very fervently to-day.

Spiritual Bouquet—

Teach me to know the Father, Son,
And Thee of both to be but one.

WAITING

Vigil of Pentecost.

"*On the last day . . . Jesus said: 'He that believeth in Me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water; but this He said of the Spirit which they should receive who believed in Him'*" (St. John vii. 37, 38. "Communion" for Whitsun Eve).

1*st Prelude.* Still in the Cenacle, waiting with Mary.
2*nd Prelude.* Grace to be in the place "appointed" at every moment of this day.

Point I.—Where to Wait

I could not wait anywhere else on this last day but in the Cenacle with Mary. We have said our *Veni Creator* together all this week. I have told her everything—she knows all my hopes and all my desires. She has said so much to me, and helped me so much with my preparation, she will probably have some special lesson reserved for this last day; in any case, I feel sure that the closer I keep to her the larger will be my share of the Holy Spirit. Where did Jesus say the Apostles were to wait? "He commanded that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but should wait for the promise of the Father" (Acts i. 4). His order was explicit—there was no room for doubt. If I want to wait well, to pray well, to watch well and prepare well, on this last day before the Holy Spirit comes, I must be quite sure that I am in the place appointed by Jesus, that is to say, first of all, that I am in union with His Church, in union not only with Our Blessed

Lady, but with Peter, with the Vicar of Christ; and secondly, that I am living each moment of the day by obedience to my Master, doing the particular duty appointed, at the particular time, because it is the time appointed; writing this letter or reading this book, saying my Rosary or paying my Visit to the Blessed Sacrament, because it is appointed. No matter what the duty is—spiritual or temporal—if it is what *He* has *commanded*, I may be sure that I am in the place appointed, even though to me it may seem a most uncongenial spot in which to be waiting for the Holy Spirit! If this is the way I am keeping my Vigil of Pentecost, I need not be afraid of missing the Holy Spirit when He comes, any more than Mary was, or the Apostles, for He is sure to look for me in the place appointed.

Point II.—How to Wait

How did Mary and the Apostles wait? "With great joy: they were always in the Temple, praising and blessing God" (St. Luke xxiv. 52, 53). I must not forget the joy and the praise—the *joy* which must be mine at the thought that I am allowed to wait with Mary and His chosen ones, inside the Fold, with as much right to the Holy Spirit as any of the others. I might, but for His goodness, have been with the "other sheep," wandering and uncertain, having no place appointed. It is only by His mercy that I am where I am, knowing definitely what to do, how to do it and when to do it. It is all the Good Shepherd's doing. No wonder that *joy* fills the heart of each member of His little flock as it waits for the Holy Spirit.

Mary and the Apostles praised God while they were waiting, and I must be ready with my praise to-day too—as ready to praise Him for what He withholds as for what He gives, for this is the arrangement that I made with Him at the beginning

of my *Veni Creator;* the choice of gift was to be left to Him.

Every duty, then, to-day shall be done with Mary in expectation of the Holy Spirit, every prayer shall be said with her, every suffering borne with her. *This* is my Cenacle, and this is where I must wait. The time is getting very short, efforts must be redoubled, desires increased, thoughts all on things above; a very strict look-out kept for anything that might make the Holy Spirit deviate in His swift course towards me; a greater recollection, a greater fidelity, a greater faith, remembering always that it will be unto me, as it was to those of old, according to my faith.

Point III.—Why does God make me Wait?

Why did He make the Apostles wait, who were so anxious for the Holy Spirit to come, so anxious to begin their work, so much in need of the Paraclete? Why did He make our Blessed Mother wait—she whose heart was so ready, whose love was so perfect, whose desire was so intense? He could have sent the Holy Spirit at once, even as He sent the two Angels, while the disciples were gazing at the cloud that had received Him out of their sight. But no, His order was: Go and wait. Surely the reason is that there are so many lessons to be learned by *waiting* which can be learned in no other way. Waiting calms the passions, checks impatience, gives time for reflection and prayer, prevents hasty judgments and unwise actions. Waiting is a splendid test of faith, of sincerity, of patience, of love, of perseverance, of the power to bear disappointment, desolation, fatigue. How independent I should be if I got all I asked for at once! It is for *my* sake that God waits, not for His; but to all those who wait for Him God will come. "If it (the vision) make any delay, wait for it, for it shall surely

come" (Hab. ii. 3). And the Holy Spirit *will* come to me to-morrow if I have been keeping faithful vigil. I may not *feel* that He has come; it is quite possible that the great day itself, for which I have been preparing, may find me in a state of desolation and coldness and dryness; but that will make no difference—my faith will be strong enough to *know* that He has come and that the gifts are mine.

Come, then, O Creator Spirit, Thy whole Church is waiting for Thee; come with all Thy gifts, dividing to every one according as Thou wilt (1 Cor. xii. 11).

Colloquy with Mary, with whom I am going to wait with "great joy" to-day.
Resolution. To be in the place appointed to-day.
Spiritual Bouquet. "I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you" (St. John xiv. 18).

THE MISSION OF THE HOLY GHOST

Whit-Sunday.

"*What the soul is to the body of a man, that the Holy Ghost is to the Body of Christ, which is the Church. What the Holy Ghost does in the whole Church, that the soul does in all the members of one body*" (St. Augustine).

1*st Prelude.* In the Cenacle with the hundred and twenty disciples.

2*nd Prelude.* Grace to realise something of what happened on the Day of Pentecost.

Point I.—The Descent of the Holy Ghost

"Suddenly there came a sound as of a mighty wind coming." The disciples "were all together in one place"; and they all felt it; it filled the whole house, and they knew that the great moment had come. The Holy Spirit had come down, the Church was formed, it was in each one of those who were waiting there. "Lo, the Kingdom of God is *within* you" (St. Luke xvii. 21). The Holy Spirit had taken possession of each heart. His mission, which was to last to the end of all time, had begun. But although they knew this, the Holy Spirit gave them a sign of His coming. "There appeared to them parted tongues as it were of fire, and it sat upon every one of them." As He had taken the form of a dove at the Baptism of Christ, in token of love and tenderness, so now He took the form of fire in token of the zeal and fervour that He was imparting to these first Apostles. They were to "go and teach

all nations," then they must have not only *fire*, but *tongues* of fire—the gift of speech and language, the power of understanding and making themselves understood, so that they could fulfil their mission. These tongues of fire are a beautiful symbol, too, of what the Church, guided by the Holy Spirit, is to be through all time—a great Society which shall be able to understand all nations, and to make herself understood by them.

And just as the disciples waited on that first Day of Pentecost for the Holy Spirit to come and give birth to the Church, to come and dwell within it and make it infallible and immortal, so the whole Church over all the world is waiting to-day—"all together in one place," namely, the centre of unity. There are no doubts, no discussions, all are of one mind, all have one desire; and the Holy Spirit, Who lives in it and guides it, will come to His waiting Church with a fresh outpouring of His grace.

Point II.—The Mission of the Holy Ghost

"They were all filled with the Holy Ghost." The breath of life was breathed into the little Society; its spirit came into it, and the machinery of the Holy Catholic Church was set in motion, with power to go on for ever, because from henceforth it was to have the perpetual presence of a Divine Teacher.

But the Mission of the Holy Ghost was to create the body too—the mystical body of which Christ is the Head (Eph. i. 22, 23); and it was by uniting Himself with it and uniting it with its Head that the body was created or organised. So there could be no mystical body—no visible Church—till the Son of God had become incarnate and formed its Head. It was through the merits of the Head that the body was formed, and the mission of the Holy Ghost, Who was to be the spirit or life of the body, was also

dependent on the merits of the Incarnate Head. The work of Redemption was not complete till the God-Man had ascended into Heaven and installed our human nature at the Right Hand of God the Father.

These reflections will help us to see why the Holy Spirit could not be given till Jesus was glorified (St. John vii. 39). When the Head was glorified, and the creation of the body was complete, then—and not before—the Holy Ghost, ever proceeding from the Son, came down, *through Him*, to quicken and inhabit the body—that is, to begin His mission on earth. "It is expedient for you that I go, for if I go not," the Holy Spirit will not—*cannot*—come; for He cannot dwell in a body that is not completely organised. And how expedient it was for the body that the Holy Spirit should come we shall never realise here, but we shall be realising it more and more through all eternity.

The mystical body had its *members* long before it was created—even from the time of our first parents. As the Lamb had been "slain from the foundation of the world," so His merits had been applied, and the Holy Spirit had been invisibly working in individuals. They belonged to the Church by anticipation. But now the individuals are all to be gathered together to form one visible body; the Kingdom of Heaven—that is, the Church—is to be "opened to all believers," because the Head is glorified; and the Holy Spirit has come to reside in this body, to keep its members for ever united to one another, and to their Head, and *as a body* to Himself. Any individual member can, of course, "quench the Holy Spirit" and sever the union, for the union of each member with the Holy Ghost depends on his own will; but the union of the whole mystical body—of the Church, with the Holy Ghost can never be severed, for it depends on *God's* will, and is therefore indissoluble.

The *visible body* is just as much a token of the presence of the Holy Spirit as was the *dove* at the Baptism of JESUS, or the *tongues of fire* at Pentecost. And it is because of this indwelling of a perpetual living Teacher in the Church that there is not only union, but *unity*, and this unity is one of the great marks which is to attract the notice of the world to the Church. "That they all may be one," JESUS prayed to His Father. Why? "That the world may believe."

So the mission of the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost was to create the body of the Church, which all can see; to be Himself its Spirit—for a body must have a spirit, "one body and one spirit" (Eph. iv. 4); to give her Divine authority and make her perpetually infallible, by the very fact that He dwells within her and that His union with her is indissoluble.

Oh, what a precious *Gift* was the gift of Pentecost! The Holy Spirit began His mission on earth, a mission which was to last as long as time lasts, a mission which is as real to-day as it was on the Day of Pentecost—that is to say, that every doctrine is as living and infallible to-day as it was then, that the Voice speaks as clearly to-day as it did then, that the Church is as infallible to-day as it was then. The Spirit of Truth has never left it. He dwells in it as really to-day as He did then, and is guiding it always into all truth, as JESUS promised that He should. There is a living Teacher in the Church, a Voice which speaks through the lips of Christ's Vicar, and which is infallible, because it is the Voice of a Divine Person.

Point III.—"WHAT MEANETH THIS?"

"And they were all astonished, and wondered, saying one to another: What meaneth this?" (Acts ii. 12). This was the attitude of the "devout

men, out of every nation under Heaven," who were assembled at Jerusalem on the day when the Holy Spirit began His mission on earth. They were confounded at the stupendous miracle of tongues. "Are not all these that speak Galileans? How have we heard every man our own tongue wherein we were born? What meaneth this?" And then Peter, using the opportunity which the Holy Spirit had given him, explained the meaning of it all—that JESUS, Who had been crucified and had risen again, and was now at the Right Hand of GOD in Heaven, had sent down the Holy Ghost as He had promised that He would. And when they understood that the promise of the Father was for them too, and for their children, for all that were far off, for whomsoever GOD should call—that is, that the Church was to be *Catholic*—they, too, wanted "the gift of the Holy Ghost," wanted to be a part of the Church which He was filling. "They therefore that received Peter's word were baptised, and there were added in that day about three thousand souls" (ver. 41); and their number increased daily. Such was the simple beginning of the greatest Society the world has ever known.

"What meaneth this" to me? It means that the promise was for me too; it means that I was included in the words "whomsoever GOD should call"; it means that I form a part of that great Society, and that "the Gift of the most high GOD" is for me. Those first Christians, St. Luke tells us, "took their meat with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising GOD" (vers. 46, 47). Their joy entered into their everyday life, and they praised GOD for all that He had done for them. Can I do less, when I think of what it might have been had I been left outside—when I think of all it means to me to be joined to the centre of unity? Surely to-day, of all days, I shall be found "eating my meat with gladness," and praising GOD for the Holy

Catholic Church, and for making me a member of it.

O Creator Spirit, I thank Thee for coming to create the Holy Catholic Church; I thank Thee for taking up Thy permanent abode with it; I thank Thee that I am a child of the Church.

Colloquy with Mary, who is sitting by the cradle of the new-born Church. Three thousand more souls have been given into her maternal keeping. They have been baptised, have received the Sacrament of Confirmation, and are going back to the Gentile countries from which they came, to prepare the way of the Apostles, who are so soon to carry out their Master's command: Go and make disciples of all nations.

Resolution. To praise GOD to-day for the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

Spiritual Bouquet. "I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church"—that is, I believe that the Holy Ghost is the soul of Christ's mystical body, the Church.

FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST

Whit-Monday.

"*And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost*" (Acts ii. 4).

1*st Prelude.* In the Cenacle with Mary, at the cradle of the new-born Church.

2*nd Prelude.* Grace to realise the value of the gift I have received.

Point I.—MARY WAS FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST. WHAT FOR?

WHY shouldest thou, my Mother, receive the Holy Ghost? Surely there is no need for fresh grace for thee; thou hast always been "full of grace," even before thou wast the Mother of Divine Grace, and since then what stores of Divine Grace thou hast received during the thirty-three years spent with the Author of Grace!

My child, it is true that I have always been "full of grace," but my capacity for receiving grace is always increasing, as my responsibility, and therefore my need of grace, increases. At the Foot of the Cross, during those three hours that I stood there, I made my sacrifice; I gave up my own Son, and became a Mother to all those for whom He was dying. Those dying words of His: "Woman, behold thy son"—behold thy new family—gave me a fresh responsibility, and now my Divine Spouse has come and brought me the grace to bear it. Now that the child is born, He has given me the nourishment for it. That is why you find me sitting by

its cradle to tend and care for it. I shall be with it through all the stages of its development to the end of time; it will always need me, for all its grace will come to it through its Mother. I shall be the hidden instrument, working out of sight, as Mothers generally do. The gifts of tongues and of miracles are not necessary for me. I shall work by my intercession, and by the grace and help which I shall always be gaining for the visible workers, as well as for each individual member of the great Society. Do I not need to receive the Holy Ghost to give me grace for all this? Yea, I need a richer portion than any one, because a mother's work for her child is so important and so far-reaching.

Point II.—The Apostles received the Holy Ghost. What for?

Mary answers this question for me too. She is so glad that I have come back again to the loved spot, where we have spent such precious hours waiting together, and that I want to ask her some questions about the great event of yesterday. She tells me that the Apostles, too, needed grace to prepare them for their new work of evangelising the world, but that first they needed the Holy Ghost to work a great change in themselves—to complete their conversion—that they were quite different men now; the same men who had been so timid and cowardly during their Master's Passion, so unbelieving about His Resurrection, were now full of courage, faith and zeal, ready to run any risk, if only they could spread the faith throughout the whole world. This change could only be wrought by the Holy Ghost, and it was necessary before God could trust them with His great work. Then, also, each had to receive the special gift that each needed for his special part in the work—Peter, as Christ's Vicar on earth, needed gifts quite different from those

John needed; each had now just what he wanted, and was ready to be, not like his Mother, the *hidden* instrument, but a *visible* instrument, doing his part for the new-born child in the cradle. Some were to teach and instruct it, some were to preach to the world about it, some to work miracles for it, some to arrange and plan how it was to be brought up, some were to suffer and make sacrifices for it, and all were eventually to lay down their lives for it, before they went to pray for it in Heaven. Indeed, the Apostles had need of the Holy Ghost.

Point III.—I RECEIVED THE HOLY GHOST. WHAT FOR?

You said, my Mother, that I was to take no notice of feelings, and that whether I feel it or not, I *have* received the Holy Ghost; I should be so glad if you would tell me what *I* have received Him for.

For much the same reasons, my child, as the Apostles did; you, too, have your own particular work to do for the Church, but before you can do it, you must be prepared and trained for the work. This preparation and training are the work of the Holy Ghost, and can only be accomplished by His making in you whatever changes He sees necessary. You may have active work to do, you may have to suffer, you will certainly have to pray. For all these you need grace. The Holy Ghost has come to give you the particular grace you need, to sanctify and prepare you for all He has in store for you, to answer your *Veni Creator* in His own way, and then to use you as He will. What you have to do now is to see to it that you co-operate with the grace given. Be supple in His Hands—be like the wax, smooth, soft, yielding, good for nothing except to receive the seal which its owner puts upon it, and once the seal is there, diverting all attention from itself to the image with which it is stamped.

"Grieve not the Holy Spirit of GOD, whereby *you* are sealed" (Eph. iv. 30). Be like the clay in the hands of the potter, offering no resistance, but letting him make of it what he will. "Cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as clay is in the hand of the potter, so are you in My Hand" (Jer. xviii. 6). Leave the kind of work you do, or the place where you do it, or the people under whom you do it, entirely in His Hands; have no wishes apart from His. Let your own sanctification be your chief work; the more careful you are about it, the greater will be your zeal for souls. Live in the present, the only moment that GOD gives you; leave the future where alone it is safe—in GOD'S Hands, and do not spoil your chance of using the present by thinking of it. It is to produce in you all these child-like dispositions that the Holy Spirit has come to you. Believe that He has come and claim your grace.

Colloquy with Mary. How can I thank you enough, my Mother, for explaining all to me! I will, indeed, try to profit by the great gift that I have received. I will try to be pliable in the Hands of the great Moulder, Who must mould me into the shape He wants me to be before He can use me to help Him in His great work.

Resolution. To put no obstacle in the way of the Holy Ghost's work in my soul.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Extinguish not the Spirit" (1 Thess. v. 19).

THE GIFT OF WISDOM

Whit-Tuesday.

"Who shall know Thy thought, except Thou give wisdom, and send Thy Holy Spirit from above" (Wisdom ix. 17).

1*st Prelude.* Still in the Cenacle.
2*nd Prelude.* The grace of wisdom.

Point I.—What is Wisdom?

As the use we make of the gifts we have received depends upon ourselves, we will go back to the Cenacle as often as we can to stir up the gifts that are in us (2 Tim. i. 6) by meditating about them, and thus strengthening our *will* with regard to them—the surest way of avoiding the danger of allowing them to lie dormant. We will meditate specially about the seven gifts which were named by Isaias in his prophecy of the Messias (chap. xi. 2). The sevenfold gift of the Holy Spirit was to rest in all its fulness upon Him, and in its measure upon each one of His followers. The prophet mentions first the Gift of *Wisdom*, for in Him "are hid all the treasures of wisdom" (Col. ii. 3). What is meant by wisdom? Not the "wisdom of this world," which makes its children "wiser than the children of light" (St. Luke xvi. 8); not the "wisdom of speech" (1 Cor. i. 17); not "carnal wisdom" (2 Cor. i. 12); not "the learning of wickedness"—that is not wisdom (Ecclus. xix. 19), though the devil persuaded our first parents that it was.

"But where is wisdom to be found?" (Job xxviii. 12). It is "from above"; it is one of the best gifts, one of the perfect gifts which come down from the Father of lights (St. James i. 17). "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom" (Job xxviii. 28). "Wisdom is better than all the most precious things. Whatsoever may be desired cannot be compared to it" (Prov. viii. 11); it is "glorious, and never fadeth away" (Wisdom vi. 13); it is an "infinite treasure" (chap. vii. 14); "a certain pure emanation of the glory of Almighty GOD; the brightness of eternal light, the unspotted mirror of GOD's majesty, and the image of His goodness" (vers. 25 and 26). "We speak the wisdom of GOD in a mystery, a wisdom which is hidden, which GOD ordained before the world unto our glory, which none of the princes of this world knew, for if they had known it they would never have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Cor. ii. 7, 8). Wisdom, then, is amongst "the deep things of GOD" which He reveals to us by His Holy Spirit (ver. 10). "O the depth of the riches of the wisdom of GOD!" (Rom. xi. 33). The inspired writers, both in the Old and New Testaments, seem at a loss for words to describe wisdom; and no wonder, for it is one of the attributes of GOD—it is GOD Himself—the "image of His goodness." Christ, St. Paul tells us, "is made unto us wisdom" (1 Cor. i. 30). And this wisdom is the first of the gifts which the Holy Spirit has brought me from above. I may humbly believe that I have my little share in this particular "gift of the most High GOD," that it is within me for me to use if I will. Let me see, then, in the next point who are the happy ones who may rest assured that they are using their Gift of Wisdom.

Point II.—WHO ARE THE WISE?

1. *The humble,* for JESUS tells us that there are things which GOD hides from the wise and prudent—

that is, from those who have the wisdom of this world—and which He reveals to *little ones* (St. Matt. xi. 25). So that those who are little and humble have secrets revealed to them by GOD which the wise men of the world know nothing about—in other words, they have the Gift of Wisdom which is from above. The three wise men of old counted their own wisdom as nothing when once they had humbled themselves to drink at the Fount of the Heavenly Wisdom.

Am I humble enough to be wise? That is, am I ready to cease from my own wisdom (Prov. xxiii. 4), which is so precious to me, and to listen instead to GOD'S secrets, which are the expression of His will to me, and which will make me "truly wise"? With the lowly is wisdom (Prov. ii. 2)—let me remember it, and that GOD says of the little one to whom He gives wisdom: "How *great* is he that findeth wisdom!" (Ecclus. xxv. 13).

2. *The "fools for Christ's sake"* (1 Cor. iv. 10). "Let no man deceive himself; if any man among you seem to be wise in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise" (chap. iii. 18). We are so apt to deceive ourselves about this—it is so contrary to our ideas of ourselves that we have got to become fools! Yet it is so, for those who would be "truly wise" must be continually showing by their behaviour that this world has to take a secondary place, showing that they must seek *first* the Kingdom of Heaven, and that everything that has to do with that Kingdom is of the greatest interest to them, while the things of this world interest them little. The maxims and laws and principles of this world are nothing to them. They neither study them nor follow them. No wonder the *worldly*-wise—those whose whole interest is centred in the world—cannot understand them, and call them fools! And then, more strange still, they seem to glory in their humiliation! They are glad to be fools for Christ's

sake; they remember that their Master was treated as a fool by Herod, and they rejoice to be counted worthy to follow in His steps. They understand that to accept humiliations patiently is the surest way of learning to be humble. They do not want to be above their Master. He *sought* humiliations—they at least will not avoid them.

How far am I content to be a fool for Christ's sake? Shall I ever be wise enough not to mind being thought a fool? Wise enough to be proud to be amongst the foolish things that GOD has chosen? (1 Cor. i. 27). Wise enough to count the curling lip, the raised eyebrow, the half-suppressed smile, the satirical word, as *proofs* that though I may be a fool in the eyes of the world I am counted wise by the children of the Kingdom and by Him Who was content to be thought a fool for my sake? O Creator Spirit, help me to stir up the gift of heavenly wisdom which is mine. Having meditated upon it, I feel more than ever my need of it, and my humble prayer is: "Give me wisdom" (2 Par. i. 10).

"If any of you want wisdom, let him ask of GOD, Who giveth to all men abundantly and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering" (St. James i. 5, 6).

Colloquy with the Holy Ghost.

Resolution. I have said: "I will be wise" (Eccles. vii. 24).

Spiritual Bouquet. "GOD hath given her" (wisdom) "to them that love Him"; and "GOD loveth them that love her" (Ecclus. i. 10, iv. 15).

THE GIFT OF UNDERSTANDING

Wednesday in Whitsun Week. Ember Day.

"*Give me understanding*" (Ps. cxviii. 34).

1*st Prelude.* In the Cenacle.
2*nd Prelude.* The grace to make good use of the Gift of Understanding.

Point I.—What is Understanding?

The second gift by which the Holy Ghost manifests His presence in the soul is that of *Understanding*. It is one of His own qualities, and He brings it with Him to endow the soul which He enters. One of the effects of His coming is that the soul has this gift. Let us try to find out in this meditation what is the Gift of Understanding that we have received. We shall best understand it by studying what we are told about the state of the Apostles' comprehension before they received this gift.

When Jesus told them about His Passion and His Resurrection, we read, "they understood none of these things" (St. Luke xviii. 34). They seemed to be incapable of taking them in. Mary understood, but she was always full of the Holy Ghost, and she knew how to use the sevenfold gifts. Even after the Resurrection they did not understand—Jesus had to upbraid them for their "incredulity and hardness of heart" (St. Mark xvi. 14). It was not till He had "opened their understanding" that

they understood that He was the Messias of Whom the Scriptures spoke, and that that was why "it behoved Him to suffer and to rise again from the dead the third day" (St. Luke xxiv. 45, 46). But after they had received the Gift of Understanding all this was changed, none grasped so fully and were able to explain more clearly the truths of their religion. They could speak of what they themselves had seen. This is the effect of the Gift of Understanding. It throws light on faith, making us see how beautiful its mysteries are, how true and reasonable. It makes the truths of our holy religion stand out so clearly that we can see them and grasp them. The reason why the Saints in Heaven do "not need the light of the lamp, nor (even) the light of the sun" is because the Lord God Himself enlightens them (Apoc. xxii. 5). The light of Understanding burns so brightly that they "know all mysteries." This gift is a part of their very life, and, in its measure, it is a part of mine too. To what extent am I using it? What is my understanding of spiritual things? Is my faith, with the help of this gift, so strong that it is almost sight? Does my understanding throw its light upon the Holy Scriptures, and make me long to study them just for the joy of seeing how they bear witness to the precious truths of my faith, to search them as Our Lord bid His disciples do, to see how they give testimony of Him and of all the things He taught them? (St. John v. 39). The Gift of Understanding does not tell me what to believe—no, the Church does that—but it lights up my faith; it is like a candle held behind to show it up. One of the Holy Ghost's special offices is to illumine the hearts of men. And as He illumined the minds of the Apostles at first, and through them the Church, so He illumines the Church still, so that she is always full of light, and knows exactly what the original faith is that was committed to her charge. This is the result of the perpetual Gift of Understanding

that rests with the Church. "He shall bring all things to your mind whatsoever I have said to you," not fresh things, but He will throw light upon the old truths. He will let the Gift of Understanding light up the Gift of Faith.

O Creator Spirit, I thank Thee for the precious Gift of Understanding with which Thou hast endowed Thy Church, and I thank Thee for bestowing it on me too. Make me faithful in using it.

Point II.—Those who Understand

I know that I have received this gift, but how am I to know whether I am making use of it? The Church, I know, is always full of the Gift of Understanding, because, as I have seen, *her* gifts are not conditional, but depend on God's will. But my Gift of Understanding is conditional. I have got it, but it will be no sort of good to me unless I use it. All this depends on my will. The Holy Spirit has done *His* part in giving it to me. I can apply three tests to my soul which will help me to find out whether I am doing *my* part and using my Gift of Understanding.

1. Those who understand are *obedient.* "Give me understanding and I will search Thy law and I will keep it with my whole heart" (Ps. cxviii. 34). "I have had understanding above ancients because I have sought Thy commandments" (ver. 100). By my obedience, then, I can test my understanding. It is not a matter of feeling, nor is it a matter of intellect, but it is a spiritual light given to the mind, which makes its possessor obedient to the least indication of God's will. The mule does not obey, because he has no understanding. Do not be like him, God says (Ps. xxxi. 9); he follows his own way—not his master's. "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (St. John xiv. 15), and God has to be loved "with the whole understanding" (St.

Mark xii. 33). It is all quite clear—quite logical. Am I trying to do GOD'S will? If so, it is because I love Him; and if I love Him I am using my Gift of Understanding. The test is quite an easy one to apply.

2. Those who understand *bear reproof*. "He that yieldeth to reproof possesseth understanding" (Prov. xv. 32). Here is another test for me—one which I do not much like, but which I had better face. When a criticism is made on my work, when it is suggested that I have forgotten something or left something undone, when I am gently remonstrated with, or found fault with, or reproved, then is my opportunity of testing whether I am using my Gift of Understanding. On such occasions, Holy Writ tells us, a man of understanding will close his lips (Prov. xvii. 28). What do *I* do? This test, too, is quite an easy one. If I have any doubt, I can ask what those, to whom the sacred duty of reproving me is entrusted, have to say about the matter? One of two things—either: "I can say anything I like to So-and-so"; or: "I must wait my time, I must choose a good moment, I must not say it to-day, I dare not say that, it would not be understood, it will only make matters worse if I speak!" "If thou rebuke a wise man, he will understand" (chap. xix. 25), and he will get many benefits which the less wise miss.

3. Those who understand have an *insight into spiritual things*. Their minds are enlightened with regard to the things of GOD and to all that is supernatural. St. Paul tells us (1 Cor. ii. 14) "that the sensual man"—that is, one who "measures divine mysteries by natural reason" (*see* Note in Douai Bible)—"perceiveth not those things that are of the Spirit of GOD . . . he cannot *understand* them." But the man who is making use of his Gift of Understanding is in quite a different position. He does not spend his time in criticising and applying his

own reason to things which are above it. He is ever thirsting after spiritual things; the Scriptures are a delight to him, because they were written by GOD specially for his learning (Rom. xv. 4). The Gospel stories of JESUS and His Blessed Mother have an interest for him which is ever new—new light is ever being thrown upon them. The Liturgy of the Church is for a man of understanding a mine of gold into which he is ever digging. He longs for the Vision of GOD, and acts almost as if he *could* see Him. His habit is to treat Him as a Friend ever present, ever near, with Whom he can converse whenever he will.

What about this test? Am I, at any rate, striving after the precious treasures which the use of the Gift of Understanding will make mine?

Colloquy. "May the Paraclete, Who proceeds from Thee, enlighten our minds . . . as Thy Son has promised" (Prayer for to-day—Ember Wednesday).

Resolution. To think much to-day about the use I make of the Gift of Understanding.

Spiritual Bouquet. "We cease not to pray for you, and to beg that you may be filled with the knowledge of His Will, in all . . . spiritual understanding" (Col. i. 9).

THE GIFT OF COUNSEL

Thursday in Whitsun Week.

"*Bless* GOD *at all times; and desire of Him to direct thy ways, and that all thy counsels may abide in Him*" (Tobias iv. 20).

1*st Prelude.* In the Cenacle, with Our Lady of Good Counsel.
2*nd Prelude.* The grace to seek counsel.

Point I.—WHAT THE GIFT IS

I AM not going to concern myself during this Meditation with the Gift of Counsel which the *Church* has received, and which, because the Holy Spirit is ever pouring it out upon her, renders her decisions infallible; but with what this most practical gift will do for *me* if I use it. I have received the Gift of Counsel—it was one of the endowments which the Holy Spirit brought with Him when He came to me at my Baptism; and since He has come to make me His temple, He, the Spirit of Counsel, lives within me. What does this mean in practice? It means that I have within me a Guide Who will always tell me just what to do at the present moment. He may tell me to act, or to suspend my judgment and refrain from action till I have consulted with others to whom He may wish to send me. He may clear up everything for me at once, or His counsel may be to go on searching, hesitating, consulting, praying for light. "Thy ears shall hear the word of One admonishing thee:

This is the way, walk ye in it" (Isaias xxx. 21). But for all this the Holy Spirit must have my co-operation. His counsel must be asked for, His direction sought; and if the conditions are fulfilled, we may be sure of knowing what is the right thing to do—not only in the big crises of our lives, but in all the little trifles of every day about which we may be in doubt. No detail of our life is too small for the Holy Ghost to take an interest in. And He is far more anxious that we should take the right turnings than we can ever be, so if the counsel is not clear we may be quite sure that the fault rests with ourselves and not with Him. It is most important, then, for us to have a clear idea of what the conditions are that we have to fulfil if the Spirit of Counsel is to be ours.

Let us begin by seeing that we quite understand what this Gift of Counsel is *not*. It is not *human prudence*, which makes us look all round a question and then decide which is the most advantageous thing to do from the point of view of worldly advancement or gain, or from any point of view in which self is predominant. This divine Counsel sanctifies our natural prudence and makes it safe. It enables us to distinguish between the movements of nature and those of grace—to "discern the spirits" (1 John iv. 1). It always points out the most perfect thing to do when a choice is in question. It enables us to see our way clearly through doubts and difficulties. It allays all scruples. It distinguishes the Voice of the Beloved from all other voices. It is not natural, but wholly supernatural. Let me test myself by these marks of divine Counsel, and I shall be able to find out to what extent I am appropriating this gift.

Point II.—How it Acts

We see looming in the distance—or it may be close at hand—a turning in the road. It may be only a little bye-path, or it may be the big cross-roads. In either case, we know that we shall have to choose which road to take. If we are of the happy number of those who make use of divine Counsel, instantly the thought will come: The choice is not mine. God "knoweth the way that I take," and all I want is to know it too. My part is to remind myself of the gift that is in me; to pray that I may be shown which road is God's will for me; and then, believing that my natural prudence and judgment will be sanctified, and that the Holy Spirit will act through these, to make my choice fearlessly and confidently.

And if afterwards the choice turns out to have been an unwise one—what then? Then, not losing for an instant my confidence, I shall say: Yes, *unwise* according to the verdict of human prudence; a palpable mistake, possibly, according to the world's judgment, but God's ways are not our ways, nor His thoughts our thoughts. *He* made the decision, and though not perhaps the best in itself, it *must* be the best for me, even if His *only* object was to make me understand that I must expect to be considered a "fool for Christ's sake" (1 Cor. iv. 10).

But to be able to have this entire confidence in the guidance of the Spirit of Counsel, certain things are essential:—

1. *A Holy Indifference,* that is, I must have no will in the matter where the choice is concerned—preferences, yes; and I shall watch these most carefully to see that they do not bias my choice. I shall put down with a firm hand all natural impulse, all hurry and rashness. I shall make myself *wait*

for the Spirit of Counsel to act. And in cases where immediate action is necessary—where there is no time to wait—what then? There is always time for a swift appeal for Counsel. The Holy Spirit will understand quite as well as I do that the King's business requireth haste (1 Kings xxi. 8). If I am firmly persuaded of the fact that everything that concerns me *is* the King's business, the divine Counsel as to how to manage it will never be wanting.

2. *Humility*—a distrust of myself and of my own judgment, however good others may consider it to be. A conviction that I am unfit to be my own guide. A firm persuasion that my only safety lies in using the Gift of the Spirit of Counsel—that everything, no matter how small and insignificant it may be, is *His* concern and must be under His immediate direction.

3. *Calm*—no noise nor agitation, no worry nor anxiety, but peace and silence and patience. The Holy Spirit ever speaks quietly to the heart (Osee ii. 14). Elias was taught that the Lord did not speak in the wind, nor in the fire, but His Voice was in the gentle breeze (3 Kings xix. 11, 12). So it is still. We can never expect to hear the guiding Voice if our souls are in a state of tumult and turmoil.

4. *Union with God.* The union must be unbroken —the line of communication clear, that is, no wilful sin, no wilful imperfection even. I must be accustomed to referring everything to Him, to living side by side with Him—my life must be "hid with Christ in GOD" (Col. iii. 3). I must never be alone, and never act alone. "Come, now, that we may take counsel *together*" (2 Esdras vi. 7).

We shall find, if we examine ourselves under these four heads, sufficient reason for the fact, which we are not slow to complain about, that after praying for guidance to the Spirit of Counsel, we are sometimes left still in the dark.

Point III.—The Discerning of Spirits

"Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits if they be of God" (1 St. John iv. 1).

This presents another difficulty—I know that there are evil spirits abroad in the world, spirits of bad counsel, and that they will try to make me take the wrong turning. So insinuating and clever are their arguments that they often appear as Angels of light (2 Cor. xi. 14), and would deceive (if possible) "even the very elect" (St. Matt. xxiv. 24). How am I to distinguish? How can I try the spirits?

The "discerning of spirits" is one of the special gifts of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. xii. 10), and therefore it is one which, in our measure, we, who have received the Holy Ghost, may look to Him for grace to use.

St. Ignatius gives us some very good rules for the discernment of spirits in making our choices. They may be summarised thus:—

1. The good spirit brings joy and consolation and peace; the evil spirit, trouble and anxiety and doubt.
2. The evil spirit can do little harm unless self-love joins forces with him—humility, then, and obedience.
3. The evil spirit loves secrecy, therefore to make our doubts known to our Confessor is a good way of putting him to flight.
4. To ask: Will this suggestion or this decision help me to fulfil the end for which I was created? And will it be for the greater glory of God?
5. To ask myself what advice I should give to another on the point—to one, perhaps, whom God has placed under my guidance?
6. To put myself in imagination on my death-bed or at my Particular Judgment, and with

the help of these strong lights to make my decision.

There are many happy souls whose whole conduct and whose every action is controlled for them. The Spirit of Counsel for them speaks through their Superiors. Their use of the Gift of Counsel consists in a whole-hearted surrender of their own judgment and will, and a determination to choose always the most perfect, in order to please Him Whom they have left all to follow.

Colloquy with the Holy Ghost, thanking Him for the Gift of Counsel.

Resolution. To watch the little details of life to-day and see how the Spirit of Counsel will enter into them all if I will let Him.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Show, O Lord, *Thy* ways to me, and teach me *Thy* paths" (Ps. xxiv. 4).

THE GIFT OF FORTITUDE

Friday in Whitsun Week. Ember Day.

"*Watch ye: stand fast in the faith: do manfully and be strengthened*" (1 Cor. xvi. 13).

1*st Prelude.* In the Cenacle.
2*nd Prelude.* The grace to use my Gift of Fortitude.

I HAVE learnt now that I need never be in doubt about which way to take; I have learnt how to choose; but that is not enough. I may see as clearly as the day what my duty is, and yet I may hate it, for human nature is pressing me to take the *other* road. To take the one the Holy Spirit indicates by His unerring Counsel means sacrifice, self-denial, hopes dashed, affections severed, plans thwarted. If the Holy Spirit simply pointed out the way and then left it to itself, the soul might indeed sit down and say: Who is sufficient for these things? But He does not; He provides another gift, the Gift of Fortitude, which, if we use it, will give strength for every sacrifice—strength to carry out to the last detail every indication of the Holy Spirit, however painful it may be to self. Let us try in this Meditation to see how this gift acts, and in what circumstances we may rely upon its help.

Point I.—IN TIMES OF TEMPTATION

"Be strengthened in the Lord and in the might of His power. . . . Put you on the armour of GOD,

that you may be able to stand against the deceits of the devil, for our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places" (Eph. vi. 10–12). These are our enemies, and that we "may be able to resist in the evil day and to stand in all things perfect" (ver. 13), the Holy Spirit endows us with the Gift of Fortitude. And it is only because we do not use it that we fail to resist, and that we make such a very imperfect stand. It seems amazing that we can be so stupid as to forget what a precious weapon we have got, and only remember it when it is too late and the battle is lost! The Church seems to know how foolish her children will be in this particular, for she instructs her Bishops when they are giving the Sacrament of Confirmation (the Sacrament of *strength*) to give a blow on the cheek to each one as a reminder. She seems to single out this gift and say: Do not forget that you now have the Gift of *Fortitude* to make you strong to resist and endure temptation.

Let me try to realise that I have got this secret force within me, that I need never be alone in my temptations. If I will only rely on the Gift of Fortitude, there is no need to fear any temptation; there is far more need for the Tempter to fear me. It is because I do not realise it and do not take the trouble to draw my sword that so many temptations have power to overcome me and then to rob me of my interior peace. The Holy Ghost has done His part—given me the whole armour to make me "a strong and perfect Christian"; it remains for me to see to it that I *am* strong and that I act as a soldier who is perfectly equipped for the battle. "We are ready to die rather than to transgress the laws of God" (2 Mach. vii. 2).

Point II.—In Times of Slackness

It is to prevent us from becoming lukewarm, indifferent, listless, slack, apathetic, lazy in our spiritual life, that the Holy Spirit gives us the Gift of Fortitude. And we need it. One of the hardest things to do in the spiritual life is to *persevere* —to keep on. It is so easy, in times of fervour and consolation, to fight the good fight of faith, so easy to begin well, so easy to make resolutions, so easy to make out new schemes and fresh methods of prayer and invent new little industries, so easy to make a Rule of Life, so easy to take up new devotions, so easy to make a Retreat; but easy though it is, there is something easier still, and that is to drop all these things again a very little while after we have begun them. The Gift of Fortitude is intended to correct all this spiritual childishness: "Take courage and show thyself a man" (3 Kings ii. 2). The search after something fresh only means that we are tired of the old paths. "Be ye steadfast, immovable, *always* abounding in the work of the Lord" (1 Cor. xv. 58). This is St. Paul's advice, and he was not one to give advice which he did not follow. He says of himself: "I count all things to be but loss for the excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord, for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but as dung that I may gain Christ and may be found in Him. . . . Not as though I had already attained or were already perfect, but I *follow after*. . . . One thing I do: Forgetting the things that are behind and stretching forth myself to those that are before, I press towards the mark" (Phil. iii. 8–14). There is no apathy nor lethargy here! No, St. Paul had no time for that—it was too risky. He had an end in view, he was pressing towards it, ever persevering, not always *succeeding*—such continuous effort would not have

been necessary if he had been perfect—but he was not one to sit down under failure, nor to try something in quite another direction! "*One* thing I do," and if I do not succeed the first time, I will go on till I do. That is what perseverance means. How did St. Paul manage it? By using the Gift of Fortitude that was his. There is no other way. "I can do all things in Him Who *strengtheneth* me" (chap. iv. 13), that is, Who gives me Fortitude. "Let us therefore be thus minded" (chap. iii. 15). "He that shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved" (St. Matt. xxiv. 13).

Point III.—In Times of Suffering

We know what the Gift of Fortitude can do in times of suffering. We have only to study the history of the "glorious army of Martyrs" in all ages of the world. Their strength was something more than natural—it was the supernatural Gift of Fortitude. The Apostles had cause to use it not so very long after they had received it. When they were threatened they prayed for the gifts which they knew were theirs: "Behold, Lord, their threatenings, and grant unto Thy servants that with all confidence they may speak Thy Word" (Acts iv. 29). And they *did* speak it—and with such boldness that they soon found themselves in prison. "But an Angel by night, opening the doors and leading them out, said: Go, and standing speak in the Temple all the words of this life." And when they were again caught, and the High Priest said to them: "Commanding, we commanded you that you should *not* teach in this Name," filled with the Spirit of Fortitude, Peter and the Apostles answering said: "We ought to obey God rather than men." The result of their courage was a cruel scourging; the Gift of Fortitude, however, enabled them not only

to bear it, but to *rejoice* that they were "counted worthy to suffer reproach for the Name of JESUS." And does the story finish there? No. "Every day they ceased not, in the Temple and from house to house, to teach and preach CHRIST JESUS" (Acts v.). This is how the Gift of Fortitude acts for those who use it in times of danger and terror and suffering.

I need have no fear then. I have got the strength to bear everything that I can possibly be called upon to bear. We are fond of saying: GOD never sends a trial without sending the grace to bear it. It is quite true; but we are so apt to forget it when the suffering or the trial is there. Our first thought is a natural one—how can I avoid this trial? What can I do to alleviate this suffering? And it is only when we find we cannot do much, that we think of the supernatural Gift of Fortitude within us, which has been given us on purpose to help us through this very trial and enable us to get out of it what GOD intended we should. Let us then rely with confidence on this gift, fully persuaded that it is sufficient in times of bereavement, in times of bad fortune, in times of suffering of any kind. Human nature will shrink all the same—Our Blessed Lord's perfect human nature did too—but there will be joy that we are counted worthy to suffer—joy that comes of having something to offer to GOD, of having a proof of discipleship, of being like Our Lord and Our Lady and the Saints. This joy is one of the "Fruits of the Spirit" (Gal. v. 22), and it is a fruit very specially of the Gift of Fortitude. It is Fortitude which makes people smile through their tears, which makes them always find a good side to every ill and to every person, which makes the invalid's room the bright spot in the house. If we find any one always easy to live with and easy to get on with, it may generally be traced to the Gift of Fortitude—to the power of bearing things and putting up with all the little difficulties of everyday

life. The Gift of Fortitude is needed even for such things as these. We have got it, why do we not use it? Why is our power of *bearing* so feeble? Why do we say—or at least *think*—so often: I cannot bear it? And our conduct proves that our estimate of our powers is quite right—I cannot bear the least fault to be found with me, I cannot bear the least opposition or inconvenience or interference; it upsets me altogether—and the reason is that I am foolish enough to rely on my own strength instead of on the wonderful Gift of Fortitude which I have received, and which is sufficient for everything that I can possibly have to bear. Some people are so afraid of forgetting their Gift of Fortitude that they are always making little excuses for using it and keeping it in practice: they give themselves little things to bear, they *choose* to do things that they dislike; mortification, self-denial and self-sacrifice are their rule. They do not allow the weapon of Fortitude to get rusty in its sheath. "We account them blessed who have endured" (St. James v. 11). Their blessedness may be mine if I will.

Colloquy with the Spirit of Fortitude.

Resolution. To "take courage and be valiant" (Deut. xxxi. 7).

Spiritual Bouquet. "I can do all things in Him Who strengtheneth me" (Phil. iv. 13).

THE GIFT OF KNOWLEDGE

Saturday in Whitsun Week. Ember Day.

"*Dedit illi scientiam sanctorum.*" "*She*" (*wisdom*) "*gave him the knowledge of holy things,*" *or, She gave him the Science of the Saints* (Wisdom x. 10).

1*st Prelude.* In the Cenacle.
2*nd Prelude.* Grace to understand what the Gift of Knowledge is.

Point I.—The Science of the Saints

What is this knowledge of holy things which constitutes the Science of the Saints? It is the knowledge infused into them by the Holy Ghost, by the use of which they learned to be saints. I also have had the Gift of Knowledge infused into me; and I can, if I will, by means of it become a saint too.

We saw in our Meditation on the Gift of Understanding that it is a bright light; the result of that light is *Knowledge.* The light has made us *know* things that we never even suspected were there. Now what use are we going to make of this knowledge? What sort of things have we to know if we would be saints?

1. *What we are on this earth for.* People in general do not trouble their heads about questions of this sort—it never seems to occur to them that there may be some reason for their existence! But it is not so with those who have the Gift of

Knowledge, with those who are in the School of the Holy Ghost, trying to learn the Science of the Saints; their constant prayer is: "O Lord, make me *know* my end . . . that I may *know* what is wanting in me" (Ps. xxxviii. 5). They know by the light of Understanding the great primary truth that "Man was created to praise, reverence and serve GOD, and by this means to save his soul" (St. Ignatius); and they are for ever using that knowledge to spur themselves along the road that the Saints have trod. Constantly they ply themselves with questions on this all-important matter: Am I living as if I believed that the salvation of my soul is the one thing that matters? Am I making straight for the goal, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left, fearing anything that is likely to take my attention from the end for which I was created? Am I continually praising GOD, that is, finding nothing but good in all that He does, especially in all that He does that concerns *me?* Is my attitude towards GOD always one of reverence? "GOD is in Heaven, thou upon earth" (Eccles. v. 1). "I am but dust and ashes" (Gen. xviii. 27). Am I really His *servant*, never doing my own will, but always His?

Ah yes, those who are students in this Science School are continually testing their knowledge!

2. *What all other created things are on this earth for.* The student who is going in for the Science of the Saints learns that he has a certain definite relation to all these other things—all these creatures of GOD'S Hand—that they were all "created for man's sake, in order to aid him in the prosecution of the end for which he was created" (St. Ignatius). What a revelation this knowledge is to the student! He learns that all creation, animate and inanimate, is for him! That all the events and circumstances of his life are not things of chance, but carefully planned by GOD to help him to fulfil his end. That

he must regard his talents, his wealth, his time, his health, his position, his joys and sorrows, his successes and failures, his hardships and difficulties, all as most carefully arranged by Him Who has created him to save his soul, and surrounded him with all that will best enable him to do so. The student who has mastered this branch of the heavenly science has no anxieties; nothing worries him, he knows that everything is right; he is at peace; his Heaven has already begun.

3. *How to use all these creatures.* This is a most important branch of the Science of the Saints. He is "*to make use of them* as far as they help him to attain his end, and *withdraw himself from them* in so far as they hinder him from it" (St. Ignatius). These two directions are all-embracing. As long as any creature is helping me to save my soul I may use it, but I have always to bear in mind that it is the *means*, not the *end*, of my existence; and if I see the least danger of any creature whatever—be it a friend, a book, a place, a pleasure, a study—changing from a means into an end, there is only one course open to me if I am studying the Science of the Saints—I must *withdraw* from it. But this is difficult. Yes, sometimes well-nigh impossible, but not quite, for the student learns not only that it has to be done, but he is let into the secret of how to do it. He is taught that he must regard all creatures with a *holy indifference*—not an indifference that comes from disappointment and failure and sadness; not insensibility—no, these kinds of indifference are natural and stoical, but *holy* indifference lies in the *will*. It means being so taken up with the *end* that I have to fulfil, that I am indifferent as to the means as long as they further it. It means that my end is more to me than any creature could be; and that I shall force myself to give up any creature which I see is hindering me. This is what *mortification* means—a practice so

necessary and so precious to all who are learning the Science of the Saints. St. Ignatius tells us what point those who have learned this holy indifference have reached—they "do not wish for health rather than sickness, for wealth rather than poverty, for honour rather than dishonour, for a long life rather than a short one." Of course they do naturally, but holy indifference is part of the Science of the Saints, and that is *supernatural*. Their cry is: "I *dare* not choose my lot, I would not if I might. Choose Thou for me, my GOD, so shall I walk aright." Thou Who didst create me, Thou Who knowest my end, Thou Who hast given me all possible helps to enable me to fulfil my end, give me what Thou wilt and I will accept it, believing it to be best for me. Though Thou slay me, yet will I trust in Thee. This is the language of one versed in the Science of the Saints. He is a puzzle to the world —it cannot make him out, for he is always happy, always contented, and yet his life is far from an easy one. What is the explanation? Only that he is a student in the School of the Saints.

Point II.—WHERE CAN THIS SCIENCE SCHOOL BE FOUND?

For now that I have seen what the Science is, and know it in theory, I feel that at any cost I must pursue it; I must enter as a student in the Science School, that I may learn it also in practice.

At three places you will find branches of this School—there is one at Bethlehem, one at Nazareth, and one on the Hill of Calvary. In any of these schools you will find not only the best Teacher, GOD the Holy Ghost, but also the best Model, GOD the Son, Who has made Himself man on purpose that you may copy Him; and in striving to copy Him, with the Holy Ghost as Teacher and Guide,

you cannot fail to learn how to put into practice the Science of the Saints.

St. Ignatius directs those who are going to meditate on the mysteries of the Life of Our Lord to ask first for "an interior knowledge of Our Lord, Who *for me* is made Man, that I may the more love Him and follow Him." So that *knowledge* is to lead us to *love* and *imitation*—that is, *theory* is to be followed by *practice.*

1. "*Let us go over to Bethlehem*" (St. Luke ii. 15). Here we see put into practice the first thing that the student has to learn in the Science School—"Lord, make me know my end, that I may know what is wanting in me." What is it which hinders me in the pursuance of my end? What is wanting? I know in theory that the salvation of my soul is all that matters, but in practice what am I to do to prove that the knowledge is worth anything? I have come to Bethlehem to see what my Model did.

As I gaze once again at the familiar picture, at the poverty, the helplessness, the utter self-abandonment, what conclusions do I inevitably arrive at? That "the friendship of this world is the enemy of God" (St. James iv. 4); that the things we are accustomed to regard as important do not matter; that what the world esteems and loves is vanity and nothing else; that riches, pleasures and honours are contemptible; and that if I would know and love and imitate Jesus Christ I must be ready to put all these things on one side, as He did. "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." That was the language of the Babe of Bethlehem, and it must be mine if I would fulfil the end for which I was created.

The Science of the Saints taught them one and all to "esteem," like Moses of old, "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasure of the Egyptians" (Heb. xi. 26); taught them that there is only one thing that matters—only one thing that

they are on the earth for, and that it is better to part with all they possess, if need be, to secure that priceless treasure.

So the Babe at Bethlehem, Who is my Model, says to me: Learn of Me; do as I am doing—leave on one side the world and its maxims, practise poverty, dependence, hiddenness; imitate Me out of love for Me, and you will fulfil your end.

2. "*He went down with them to Nazareth* and was subject" (St. Luke ii. 51). It is He Himself Who takes us to the next—a Technical School, the workshop at Nazareth. Here, He says, by imitating Me, and doing as I do, you will learn what your relations should be to all the creatures by which you are surrounded. Nothing is more peaceful and calm than my life here; nothing more simple and uninteresting and monotonous from the world's point of view, and yet here I lived for thirty years, during all My boyhood and manhood, believing that GOD had put Me into the place where I could best fulfil the end for which I came into the world and had surrounded Me with the creatures which would best aid Me. And what were the creatures? Solitude, poverty, hard work, humiliation, mortification, detachment.

If I want to "*grow* in the knowledge of Our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST" (2 Peter iii. 18), I shall certainly often go down to Nazareth and see the place where "the Child grew" (St. Luke ii. 40). It is here that I shall learn to put into practice the Gift of Knowledge that I have received, for knowledge is bound to lead to love, and love to imitation. JESUS went *down* to Nazareth. I must be content to go down too—down to the lowest place, to the humblest duty, to the greatest obscurity, down in the estimation of others, down in the estimation of myself. Am I walking in the steps of Him Who came *down* from Heaven for us men and for our salvation? If not, I have not yet learned the

Science of the Saints. Again, JESUS *was subject* at Nazareth, and He is to be my Model. *Subject* for thirty years! If *He* could submit *His* judgment, cannot I submit mine? If He could give up His own ideas and ways of thinking and acting, cannot I give up mine? If He could hide the fact that He knew better than His teachers, need I be so touchy if I am told anything that I happen to know? Oh, what need I have to be often at the workshop at Nazareth, learning to practise the Science of the Saints! There JESUS of Nazareth says to me: "Learn of Me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you shall find rest to your souls"—the perfect rest that comes from having learned that the creatures with which GOD has surrounded you are the best to enable you to fulfil your end.

3. "*He steadfastly set His Face*" *to go to Calvary* (St. Luke ix. 51). Then I must go too, and learn at that school. "I judged not myself to *know* anything among you but JESUS CHRIST, and Him crucified" (1 Cor. ii. 2). So says St. Paul. The knowledge of Christ crucified was sufficient for him, learned though he was. From his crucifix he learned all that he wanted to know. Bethlehem and Nazareth are included there. All the Science of the Saints is concentrated there. Let me set my face often towards Calvary, determined to learn to put into practice all the many lessons that the Holy Ghost has to teach me there. If I imitate my Model there I shall learn the value of the Cross, of humiliation, pain, suffering, contempt, desolation, death to self in all its many forms—in one word, I shall learn the great lesson of Holy Indifference. "I have left you an example," JESUS says. This example can only be followed by treading in His steps, even to Calvary; there only can I get so far on in the Science of the Saints as to be able to say: "The world is crucified to me, and I to the world" (Gal. vi. 14).

Colloquy with the Holy Spirit. O Creator Spirit, Thou Who art my Teacher and my Guide, I shall never get so advanced in the Science of the Saints as this, but I am determined to practise with my whole heart, and though I may never in this world arrive at being wholly indifferent, nevertheless I will strive, as St. Ignatius says, "to *make* myself indifferent," and all out of love for Him Whose knowledge Thou hast infused into my soul, and Whom I long to copy more perfectly.

Resolution. To study the Science of the Saints.

Spiritual Bouquet. "The knowledge of holy things" (Wisdom x. 10).

THE "GLORIA PATRI"

Trinity Sunday.

"Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost."

1*st Prelude.* Apoc. iv. 8–11.
2*nd Prelude.* Grace to say the "Gloria Patri" from my heart to-day.

OUR Meditations on GOD the Holy Ghost are interrupted to-day by the Church bidding us think about all three Persons of the Blessed Trinity. "Blessed be the Holy Trinity and undivided unity," she says in the "Introit." So to-day we are going to meditate—not with our reason, for the subject is above it, but with our hearts—about this great Mystery of the three Persons in one GOD, which we believe, not because we understand it, but because it has been revealed. We are going to try to get a little nearer, so that we may love each Person of the Blessed Trinity more, and prove our love and our faith by our actions and our lives. The Blessed in Heaven are depicted in the Apocalypse (chap. iv. 8) as resting not day and night saying: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord GOD Almighty." We pray very often that we may do GOD'S will on earth as the Blessed do it in Heaven; we must try, then, to live up to this petition, and to know something of that holy restlessness which is never tired of praising—that is, of serving—the Blessed Trinity. "Holy, Holy, Holy!" Holy is GOD the Father; and He says: "Be ye holy, because I the Lord your GOD am

holy" (Lev. xix. 2). Holy is GOD the Son; and He came to live on earth to give us a Model of holiness. "Learn of Me." Holy is GOD the Holy Ghost; and His great work is sanctification—making holy—first the Church by dwelling in it, and next each individual member. Let us take each Person of the Holy Trinity and see how we can give them glory—that is, praise and honour them by our lives.

Point I.—GLORY BE TO THE FATHER

Our relation to GOD the Father is that of *sons*. "Because you are sons, *GOD* hath sent the *Spirit* of His *Son* into your hearts, crying: Abba Father" (Gal. iv. 6). All three Persons of the Blessed Trinity were at work, then, before I could say the word "Father." This is so with all the special offices with which each Person of the Blessed Trinity charges Himself; they all have a share in all, for each of their acts is an act of the one GOD. Creation is the special work of GOD the Father. I am His child because He created me; but I am His child in a closer way than this; He sent His Son to redeem me so that He might adopt me anew into His family, and then He sent His Spirit of love into my heart to teach me to call Him Father. He has left no stone unturned to make me understand that His love for me is that of a father yearning over his child. How am I returning this wonderful love? What do I mean—or rather, what ought I to mean—when I say: "Glory be to the Father"? Not only that all the glory of the highest Heaven is His—it is easy enough for me to mean this—but that I, His child, am doing my little part in glorifying Him, in reverencing Him, justifying to myself and to others all that He does. I ought to mean also that all my thoughts, words and actions are for His glory, that is, that I do each thing for Him

and to please Him; that *Ad majorem Dei gloriam* is my motto; that my sufferings and trials are borne patiently with the intention of pleasing my Father; that I realise that He created me to His Own Image, and that I am trying to glorify Him by letting Him find what, as a Father, He has a right to expect—that Image reflected in His child; that I am trying, in one word, to fulfil the end for which He created me, and thus to glorify Him.

"Thou art worthy, O Lord our GOD, to receive glory and honour and power, because Thou hast created all things, and for Thy will they were and have been created" (Apoc. iv. 11). So say the Blessed in Heaven. And I on earth say: "Glory be to the Father," Who created me for His will, and unworthy as I am of this great honour, He shall receive glory and honour from me.

Point II.—GLORY BE TO THE SON

Our relation to GOD the Son is that of *brethren.* This follows on our relationship to GOD the Father, for "if (we are) sons (we are) heirs also, heirs indeed of GOD and joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom. viii. 17). He is the First-born, but "the First-born among many brethren" (ver. 29). Redemption is His work; He is my Elder Brother, Who has redeemed me with His Blood, Who has sacrificed Himself that I might be adopted into His Father's family and be a joint-heir with Himself. Glory be to GOD the Son!

In Heaven they cast their crowns before Him, saying: "The Lamb that was slain is worthy to receive power and divinity and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and benediction" (Apoc. v. 12). It is easy to say it there, and it will be easy for me, too, if ever I join that blessed company; but it is here on earth that I have got to say: Glory be to the Son; and I have got to mean it

too, or I shall never say it in Heaven. What ought I to mean when I say it? How can I give glory now in my everyday life to my Elder Brother? I should like to show my gratitude and affection for all His generosity and self-sacrifice for me. He knew I should want to, and He told me before He left the earth how I could do it: "I have given you an example, that as I have done so you do also" (St. John xiii. 15). It was such a natural thing for an Elder Brother, Who did always the things that pleased His Father (St. John viii. 29), to say to the younger ones. Do as I have done—that is the way to show your gratitude and love and give Me glory. Give up your own will to My Father; say about each thing as I did: "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O my God. I am content to do it." Live a life of self-sacrifice, as I did. Be prepared to give up all, and live in obscurity, poverty, hardship, as I did. Be ready to accept humiliations, and to have hard things said of you; expect to be misunderstood and misjudged and even calumniated, as I was. If you are co-heirs with Me, you must expect to have a share in My *Cross*.

I understand. It is in proportion to the way in which I copy my Model that I shall be able to say truly: "Glory be to God the Son."

Point III.—Glory be to the Holy Ghost

Our relationship to God the Holy Ghost is that of *disciples*. If it were not for His teaching we should never be able to say: Glory be to the Father, nor Glory be to the Son. He comes with all His sevenfold gifts into our hearts just to teach us this. His particular work is *sanctification*—making holy, dwelling in each heart for the sole purpose of teaching it to give glory to God, and so fulfil the end for which it was created. Glory be to the Holy Ghost! What do I mean when I say this? How

can I give glory to my great Teacher? Surely there is only one way—by being an apt scholar, never tiring of listening to His gentle lessons, following all His indications. There is no higher way of honouring any one than obedience, no surer way of giving them glory than by letting it be seen that we consider each thing they suggest worthy of notice. This, in the world, is how we treat those whom we delight to honour. And if I would give glory to God the Holy Ghost and get Him glory, I must let it be clearly seen that I am absolutely submissive to all He says—submissive, that is, first to the Church, through which He shows me my general line of action, and next to those whom He has put individually over me and by whom He shows me my particular line of action, and lastly to His gentle Voice within me, by which, if I will let Him, He is ever sanctifying me and leading me on to perfection.

I shall say: "Glory to the Holy Ghost" with my life as well as with my lips, then, in proportion to my spirit of obedience.

Colloquy with the Blessed Trinity, Whose dwelling-place I became at my Baptism. "In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," said the Priest. "We will come to him, and will make our abode with him," said the Blessed Trinity (St. John xiv. 23). What can I render for such ineffable love? I can give my love, and prove it, not with my lips only, but by my life.

"Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts. Earth is full of Thy glory. Glory be to the Father. Glory be to the Son. Glory be to the Holy Ghost." (100 days once a day.)

"O Almighty and Eternal God, Who hast granted Thy servants to acknowledge the glory of the Eternal Trinity in the confession of the true faith, and to adore the unity in the power

of Thy majesty, we beseech Thee that by firmness in the same faith we may be ever protected from all adversities" ("Collect" for Trinity Sunday).

Resolution. To give glory to God the Father to-day by doing each thing to please Him; to God the Son by copying Him; and to God the Holy Ghost by listening to His directions.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Blessed be the Holy Trinity and undivided Unity; we will give glory to Him because He hath shown His mercy to us" ("Introit" for Trinity Sunday).

THE GIFT OF PIETY

Monday after Trinity Sunday.

"*You have received the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry Abba* (*Father*), *for the Spirit Himself giveth testimony to our spirit that we are the sons of* GOD" (Rom. viii. 15, 16).

1*st Prelude.* In the Cenacle again.
2*nd Prelude.* Grace to realise what the Gift of Piety is.

WHAT is meant by the Gift of Piety or Godliness? The word translated "godliness" in the Douai Bible is *Pietas* (piety) in the Vulgate; and the Catechism tells us that the sixth gift is the Gift of Piety. What is piety? Latin authors use the word for *dutiful conduct*—first towards the gods, and then towards parents and country; hence the word comes to mean filial affection, loyalty, patriotism, love, gratitude; in short, piety means being *child-like.* "The Spirit giveth testimony to our spirit that we are the sons of GOD," that we are really GOD'S children. How does He gradually make us realise this truth, which we think we know all about, but of which we really have such a faint notion? He gives us "the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry: Abba (Father)." He gives us the *Gift of Piety.*

Let me try to find out, in this Meditation, how far I have imbibed the spirit of adoption; how far I am using my Gift of Piety—that is, living as if GOD were my Father, as if I were His child, and as if I had filial duties to perform.

Point I.—The Father

To help me to realise what the spirit of adoption is that I have received, let me think first about the Father. What sort of a Father is He into Whose family the Elder Brother introduces me?

1. A Father Who *remembers:* "He is a tender child, I will still remember him" (Jer. xxxi. 20). What does He remember? He remembers how He created man in grace, and how he fell—and all mankind with him—from his first estate, and so lost the right to call God "Father." He remembers that He loved His lost children so much that He spared not His only Son, but sent Him down from Heaven to earth to die for them and win back for them the right to say: "Father." He remembers the history of each child—all their efforts to please Him and to love and serve Him. He does not expect too much of them—He remembers that they are but dust (Ps. cii. 14). There is only one thing that the Father does not remember, and that is the sins that He has pardoned. "I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. xxxi. 34). The writer to the Hebrews quotes this consoling text *twice* in his Epistle.

2. *A Father Who has compassion.* "As a Father has compassion on his children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that fear Him" (Ps. cii. 13). He is not a hard Master, reaping where He has not sown (St. Matt. xxv. 24). He is not stern and exacting. No, He is a *Father.* He knows the capacities, the character, the difficulties of each child. He is not extreme to mark what is done amiss; but seems not to notice their ignorance (Acts xvii. 30), and is ever ready to forgive.

3. *A Father Who corrects.* Whom the Lord loveth He chastiseth, even as a father (Prov. iii.

12). "God dealeth with you as with sons" (Heb. xii. 7). He loves us far too much to leave us without correction. "If you be without chastisement, then you are not sons" (ver. 8). Chastisement is a proof of sonship—a proof that God is our Father. And it is all in love—all because He has a high ideal for each one of His children. He created them for a certain end, and He means them to fulfil that end, and so He corrects "for our profit, that no one may go out of the way" (vers. 10 and 13).

4. *A Father Who guides.* "I will bring them through the torrents of waters in a right way, and they shall not stumble in it, for I am a Father" (Jer. xxxi. 9). A father could not let his child take the wrong way. The difficulties of the right way may be great—insurmountable for the child alone—but with his father he does not even stumble. This is the picture God draws of Himself. "Torrents of waters"—yes, but it is the right way for all that, and "I will bring them through." The child's hands are in his Father's, and he is safe.

5. *A Father Who protects.* "He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of My eye" (Zach. ii. 8). What is guarded more instinctively from anything that could harm it than the eye? And this is the simile God Himself chooses to describe His care of His children. It means that so close is the union between the Father and the child, that the child cannot be hurt without hurting the Father—that God regards any attempt to attack His children as an attempt on Himself. No one can harm God, and no one can harm the child who trusts in Him. "The very hairs of your head are all numbered" (St. Matt. x. 30). Such is the Father into Whose family the Holy Spirit tells me I have been adopted.

Point II.—The Child

The child's part is to "make a return of duty to his parents," or, as another translation has it, to "show *piety* at home" (1 Tim. v. 4). A good child is filled with gratitude, love and loyalty for the father to whom he owes so much. He shows his *gratitude* by trying to please his father and to be all that he would wish his son to be. He shows his *love* by obedience, and by his genuine sorrow when he grieves his father. He shows his *loyalty* by standing up for him. Even though his father should be a bad man, none dare say a word against him in his son's presence.

I "have received the spirit of adoption." I am a child of God. What sort of a child am I? The son honoureth the father. "If, then, I be a Father, where is My honour? saith the Lord of Hosts" (Mal. i. 6).

Let me make a little self-examination on this point. "What manner of people ought you to be in holy conversations and godliness?" (2 Peter iii. 11). What has such a Father a right to expect? A likeness to Himself (godliness means being like God); a great respect for all His plans and arrangements; an absolute devotion to His wishes; a love which fears to do the least thing He would not like; a confidence in Him which produces a diffidence of self; a loyalty which puts Him above everything else—not in theory only, but in a practice which knows no human respect; a child-like—that is unquestioning—obedience; a heart-felt contrition for anything that grieves his Father. The Father gives Himself to the child, and He has a right to expect that the child will do the same, and will love his Father with his whole heart. How far I am from being child-like! But instead of being

discouraged, I will remember that I have received the spirit of Piety, that I have got within me a force which is powerful enough to make me just the kind of child the Father wants. Let me, then, stir up the gift that is in me, and make all possible use of it, never resting till my Father can say of me (and it probably will not be till I see His Face): "This is My beloved son in whom I am well pleased." "Father, I am not now worthy to be called Thy *son;* make me as one of Thy hired servants." No, this is a prayer the Father will *not* grant. This *my son* was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found (St. Luke xv. 19 and 24), and He treats him as a *son*.

A good child has also a great devotion to his father's interests. He knows how much his father loves the other children, and he is good to them for his father's sake; because his father loves them, he loves them; because his father makes their interests his, he does the same. Let me examine my conduct as a child in my Father's house. How do I behave to the other children, to those whom I know the Father loves as dearly as He loves me? What about my zeal, my compassion, my sympathy? St. Paul could say: I have a great sadness and continual sorrow of heart . . . I wished myself to be anathema from Christ for my brethren, to whom belongeth the adoption of children (Rom. ix. 2). His love for his Father was so great that the thought that any of the other children—his brethren—should not realise that they, too, had received the spirit of adoption was almost too much for him! He had the Gift of Piety, and he used it, and it made him love God his Father to such an extent that he saw things from His point of view; and it made him love the Elder Brother to such an extent that he wanted to be like Him and give all he had if only his brethren might be saved.

Much, very much, is contained in the Gift of

Piety which I have received. What am I doing with it?

Colloquy with God the Holy Ghost, thanking Him for the Gift of Piety.

Resolution. To be a dutiful child and a sympathetic brother to-day.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Abba, Father."

THE GIFT OF HOLY FEAR

Tuesday after Trinity Sunday.

"*How great is he that findeth wisdom and knowledge! But there is none above him that feareth the Lord. The fear of* GOD *hath set itself above all things. Blessed is the man to whom it is given to have the fear of* GOD" (Ecclus. xxv. 13-15).

1*st Prelude.* In the Cenacle.
2*nd Prelude.* Grace to use this gift which is "above all things."

Point I.—THE FEAR OF THE LORD

WE have now to meditate on the last and—in some ways—the greatest of the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit which we have received. It takes us back to the first gift, Wisdom, with which it is closely connected. Holy Scripture calls it "the root of wisdom," "the fulness of wisdom," and "the crown of wisdom" (Ecclus. i. 25, 20 and 22). That is to say: Wisdom springs from the Fear of the Lord, is nourished by it, and is brought by its means to perfection. The Fear of the Lord is not only "the beginning of wisdom" (Prov. i. 7), but it accompanies it through all its stages till "they that are learned (in the Heavenly wisdom) shall shine as the brightness of the firmament" (Dan. xii. 3).

This gift follows the Gift of Piety. It is, then, the fear of a child for his father that we are going to consider. The same Spirit Who teaches us to say Father, gives us the Gift of Fear for that

Father. How does a good child fear his father? He fears to offend him; he fears incurring his father's anger; he fears to grieve him by any undutiful or ungrateful conduct; he fears the least shadow between himself and his father, and if he has done anything that he thinks his father will not like, he cannot rest till he has told him. I have received the Gift of Filial Fear—is it making me behave as a good child does?

Point II.—What the Gift is not

The Gift of Fear, like all the other gifts, rested in all its fulness, the Prophet Isaias tells us, upon Christ; therefore it can only be a holy fear. It is not, then, the fear of one who loves sin and wants to sin but dare not do so freely, because he knows that there is a hell to which he will go if he does. This is the fear of a slave—and of a base kind of slave, who, but for the fear of the lash, would do all he could to harm his master. If it is solely this "servilely servile" fear of hell which keeps a soul from sinning, that soul would sin and sin gladly were there no hell; in fact, he wishes that there *were* no hell that he might sin. There is nothing holy about this kind of fear. The Holy Ghost has nothing to do with it. It is the fear of a soul in mortal sin—a soul which by its desire and affection for sin has deliberately turned out the Holy Ghost with all His Seven Gifts.

A man who has this fear, however—base though it is—is better off than one who has it not, for he at least believes in a hell, and in Him Who has power to cast him there; and this belief may give place to a higher kind of fear; but if he dies in this state he will find himself in hell with the devils, who also believe and *tremble* for fear (St. James ii. 19).

O Holy Ghost, preserve in me the spirit of Holy Fear which Thou didst infuse into my soul at Bap-

tism, guard me from the least affection for sin, and never permit me to be separated from Thee.

Point III.—What the Gift is

It is any kind of fear which is supernatural and therefore the work of the Holy Ghost. It is the *Fear of the Lord.* It may be *servile* fear—a fear of punishment, it may be *mercenary* fear—a fear of losing the reward, or it may be *filial* fear—a fear which springs from love. *Servile* fear is certainly supernatural and most beneficial; it is the fear of God's dreadful punishments, which keeps the soul from sinning. We are not now thinking of the devilish kind of servile fear which we considered in our last point, and which goes hand in hand with an explicit wish to sin, but of the servile fear which Our Blessed Lord recommends when He says—and says to His own disciples: "Fear Him Who is able to cast both soul and body into hell." This servile fear is sufficient ground (in the form of attrition) for sacramental absolution, and therefore is most valuable, and saves many souls. But for all that it must be reckoned among the *lower* motives.

The second kind of Fear of the Lord is perhaps only a shade higher—the *mercenary* fear that fears to lose Heaven. It *is* higher, certainly, and a fear of losing Heaven is very near to a desire to win it. A desire for Heaven that is strong enough to keep a man from sinning is certainly supernatural. "The Fear of the Lord is the *beginning* of wisdom," and the beginning is seldom—perhaps never—the highest kind of fear.

What, then, is the highest kind of fear to which any soul who commits himself to the direction of the Holy Spirit will certainly attain more or less frequently in the spiritual life, according as he is faithful to the inspirations of grace? It is the Gift of *Filial* Fear. It is the fear that Our Blessed

Lord experienced in the Garden of the Agony. "He began to fear" (St. Mark xiv. 33), we are told, and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says: "He was heard for His reverence" (chap. v. 7). What Our Lord feared was contact with sin and His Father's Face being averted from Him on this account. The thought of it was almost more than He could bear. "If it be possible, let this chalice pass; nevertheless not My Will but Thine be done." His prayer was one of reverence and submission to His Father's Will, and this was the result of filial fear.

If I am putting into practice my Gift of Filial Fear there will be present in me too—in a greater or less degree, according to my co-operation with the Holy Spirit—a horror of sin and a reverence for God and His Holy Will.

1. *A horror of sin.* I shall have a horror of sin in itself, quite apart from any of its effects or consequences. Because my Father hates it, I shall hate it; "because it crucified my loving Saviour, Jesus Christ," I shall have an inward shrinking from it. I shall avoid anything that might be an occasion of sin as I should the plague; the very thought that I might fall and grieve my Father will be such a terror to me that I shall instinctively turn away from the occasion. This attitude of soul with regard to sin is brought about by the Holy Spirit's agency, by means of the Gift of Holy Fear. I begin to see now, as I meditate, why this gift comes last, why it is in some ways above the others, why it is the *crown* of wisdom. It is because this Gift of the Fear of the Lord includes Filial Fear. A gift that will make me hate and shrink from something that by nature I love and enjoy, is not the first that I shall learn to use. Filial Fear will probably lie dormant for a long time; and there are times even when the soul is far advanced in the

spiritual life when it will be left sleeping. It is in proportion as the love of GOD increases that Filial Fear will be active. When the lamp of love burns dim, Filial Fear goes to sleep, for he who loves GOD only a little will only a little fear to sin; he who loves much will fear much—that is, will fear to do the least thing that would grieve Him.

If I am using my Gift of Filial Fear, I shall have a great delicacy of conscience; contrition will be my dominant note—contrition especially for the past, showing itself by a dread now of the sin for which I had so little dread then; by a determination to make reparation for the grief I have caused my loving Father; showing itself by the desire that there shall never be anything between us again—nothing in me that could hurt Him, or even cause Him the least anxiety; and showing itself, too, by going to Him not only with indeliberate venial sin, but also with any want of perfection, telling Him how sorry I am, and asking His forgiveness. All this is the result of the Gift of Filial Fear, which love teaches me to use.

2. *A reverence for GOD and submission to His Will* are inseparable from Filial Fear. They are its immediate effects. The truest reverence a son can show to his father is that of fearing to do anything he would not like, and of carrying out his wishes in everything. This Filial Fear will do the same for GOD'S children. It will produce in them a sense of their own nothingness and unworthiness, and a consequent sense of GOD'S greatness and majesty. "Serve ye the Lord with fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling" (Ps. ii. 11). And nothing will help us to say: "Not my will but Thine be done," so much as the Gift of Filial Fear. In a child the fear of doing the least thing his father would not like is very near akin to wishing to do all that his father would like, to carrying out his least

command, even though it may be distasteful; to a growing conformity in taste and desire and ways of looking at things, to his father's. This is the inevitable result of love between an earthly son and his father, and it will be the inevitable result, too, with us, who are "the sons of God," if we make use of the Gift of Filial Fear. It will gradually develop in us a conformity to Him—to His tastes, to His will, to His point of view, till at last we arrive at "perfecting sanctification in the fear of God" (2 Cor. vii. 1).

Point IV.—The Building

It is Wisdom who is building a house for herself (Prov. ix. 1), and the material she uses from first to last is the Fear of the Lord. "The Fear of the Lord is the beginning" (chap. i. 7). She lays a good solid foundation of fear—fear of hell and God's judgments, fear of losing Heaven; and on this foundation she gradually builds up her house. *All* the bricks are made and put in place by the Fear of the Lord, but the material is finer and more delicate as the building progresses; its character changes—the fear of losing Heaven gives place to an ever-increasing desire to gain it. And, as the building gets near its completion, the material is more and more refined; the servile fear of the foundation gives place to a filial fear of offending God, and when the top stone is reached it is still the Fear of the Lord that Wisdom uses for her house: "The crown of Wisdom is the fear of the Lord"—a fear which is only another word for love—a love so great that it fears to grieve God.

Such is the house which Wisdom is building with the material of the Fear of the Lord. Have I anything to do with it? Yes, surely, for it is I who

must supply the bricks, and the quality of the material depends upon me. There are times—long after the foundation has been laid, and the walls of the house are getting quite high—when I shall be found using the coarse material of servile fear. How is this? Simply that I have got tired of the work, have allowed myself to take it easily, to become slack and lukewarm; then has followed temptation, to which I have perhaps yielded; one spiritual duty after another suffers. It is no use, I say to myself, I cannot go on; it is no use talking to me of the love of GOD; I do not love Him, and I do not feel sure that He loves me! Ah! the building is in grave danger—it is certain that the bricks cannot just now be made of *love*. What comes to the rescue and saves the building? Servile fear. "Fear Him Who is able to cast both soul and body into hell," Our Lord said to His disciples, and He knew that there would be times when they would need the admonition.

But all the bricks are not made of servile fear. In proportion as I faithfully listen to the inspirations of grace, a love more or less perfect, but ever increasing, will help on the building; and sometimes a brick will be put in from *pure* love, which has cast out the servile fear.

I should like my fear to be always the outcome of love, but this is a *state* of perfection for which I must wait till the mists of earth have no longer the power to prevent my seeing clearly, till Wisdom can put on the top stone, and crown her building with Holy Fear—"perfecting sanctification in the Fear of GOD"; for "the Fear of the Lord is the *crown* of Wisdom."

Colloquy. O Holy Spirit of GOD, I thank Thee for Thy sevenfold gifts. I thank Thee especially for Thy Gift of Holy Fear. Help me so to use it that I may often be able to please GOD by

acts of perfect love, even though in between I may find myself going back to the lower motive of servile fear.

Resolution. So to use my Gift of Holy Fear to-day that I may go on building with acts of perfect love.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long."

"IF THOU DIDST KNOW THE GIFT OF GOD"

Eve of Corpus Christi.

"*I will give you greater gifts than you had from the beginning*" (Ezech. xxxvi. 11).

1*st Prelude.* Jacob's well.
2*nd Prelude.* A greater appreciation of the value of this gift.

It was because the Holy Spirit was to dwell perpetually in the Church that Our Blessed Lord could confide to its keeping that best Gift of His own most Precious Body and Blood. He could not have entrusted such a gift to the keeping of any human society, however secure it might be. He could not have put such a gift into mere human hands; but in hands anointed by the Holy Ghost it was safe; in the Great Society where the Holy Ghost was always to dwell, over which He was always to preside, there was no danger. In all security Jesus could say: "Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (St. Matt. xxviii. 20). And that He might be with His flock, might be their spiritual Food and Drink, all the time that they were journeying through this world, was the reason for the existence of the Church. It was to be the Ark of salvation for His children in the world, because it was the Ark which was to provide Food for them by producing, sheltering and protecting the Bread of Life and serving It out day by day to the children.

The Gift, then, that we are going to meditate about during the Octave of to-morrow's great Feast is the centre of everything, the pivot round which everything turns, the reason for which everything else exists. It is the jewel in the casket, the kernel in the fruit, the point of the whole wondrous story. It is for this that we were created; for this that we were made members of the Church; for this that we were made soldiers of Christ—His Body-guard; for this, also, that all the other Sacraments were instituted: *Penance* to put away all in ourselves that would prevent us from receiving this Food; *Holy Order* to make Priests, without whom we could not receive It; *Holy Matrimony* to ensure a continual supply of both Priests and people to the Church; *Extreme Unction* to be a consolation and strength when we have received this Food for the last time, or when we may be too ill to receive It. "I will give you greater gifts than you had from the beginning."

Point I.—"If Thou didst know the Gift of God"

In passing from Judæa to Galilee, Our Lord was obliged to go through Samaria. He was weary with His long journey, and so He sat on Jacob's well; He was thirsty, and so He asked a Samaritan woman who came to draw water to give Him to drink; He was hungry, and so His disciples had gone into the city to buy meats; and so, by a most natural sequence of events, Jesus found Himself alone with the Samaritan woman. And yet, natural though everything seemed, all was wholly supernatural. "He was of necessity to pass through Samaria," not because it was the direct route, but because a lost sheep, whom He was seeking, dwelt there. He sat on Jacob's well, not only because He was tired, but because He knew that it was there that He would meet the woman. He sent His disciples to

buy meats, not so much because He was hungry, as that He might be alone and undisturbed with her. He was thirsty because He wanted her soul, and He opened the conversation by saying: "Give me to drink"—He meant: "My child, give Me thy heart," and so slake My thirst.

"How dost Thou, being a Jew, ask of me to drink, who am a Samaritan woman?" She did not understand—how should she?—the love of the Sacred Heart. "If thou didst know," replied JESUS, "the gift of GOD, and Who He is that saith to thee: Give me to drink; thou perhaps (there is something pathetic about this word) wouldst have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." She still could not understand. Let me stay a little while and see whether I really understand the love of my JESUS, the greatest of Whose Gifts the Church is preparing to honour to-morrow. Do I understand that "it was of *necessity*" that, in passing from highest Heaven to the death upon the Cross, He should pass through our human nature; that it was because He wanted to meet *me* that He must be "bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh"; that He became incarnate for love of me, and because He wanted to give me His unspeakable Gift? Do I understand (no, for such love is beyond human comprehension) that it was because "His delights were to be with the children of men" that he *extended* His Incarnation, and gave them the great Gift which enabled Him to be with them always? Do I understand that it was a hunger and thirst for the hearts—the *love* of men, which made Him say, just before He gave this Gift: "With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you" (St. Luke xxii. 15)? It was a long and weary journey for Him, but He made nothing of it, because He wanted to gain the hearts of men. He made all His plans so that He could hold communion with each heart separately, without any interruption—

that He might speak to them as a man speaketh to his friend—yea, more, that He might give them "the true Bread from Heaven" and the "living Water," of which he that drinketh "shall not thirst for ever"—even His own most precious Body and Blood. Such is our JESUS! Such is the Gift to which we are preparing to do honour to-morrow! And such is the sacrifice which He gladly made in order to give us this Gift of gifts!

Point II.—"PERHAPS"

If thou hadst known the value of the gift "thou *perhaps* wouldst have asked of Him." The Samaritan woman was touched by the pathos of it, and though she did not yet understand what the Gift was, her proximity to JESUS had taught her that whatever He had to offer must be worth having, and so she asked: "Sir, give me this water." Then JESUS had to explain to her that His Gift could not go hand in hand with the gifts of the world—that if she wanted His pure gifts she must empty her heart of all those sordid things which hitherto she had cared for. It was soon done; she spread them all at His Feet—she was ready to part with everything in order to have the priceless Gift which was being offered to her.

His thirst is satisfied, for a soul has drunk of the Living Water. He is no longer hungry, and it is in vain that the disciples beg Him to eat, for, as He explains: "I have meat to eat which you know not." He is no longer weary, but longing to begin fresh fields of labour—fields that are "white already to harvest"; for the men of Samaria, led by the new convert, are coming to see the Man Who has told her all things whatsoever she has done. "And He abode there two days, and *many* believed in Him . . . and said: We know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world."

What joy in Samaria! What joy in the woman's heart! What joy in the Sacred Heart of JESUS! And it was all because when JESUS thirsted for the love of her heart and said: "Give Me to drink," *she* thirsted for the love of His Heart, and said: "Give me this water, that I may not thirst."

Perhaps! He says it of each soul. *Perhaps* when they hear of the gifts that I have to give, they will come and ask for them. *Perhaps* when the thirsty ones hear Me saying: "All you that thirst, come to the waters" (Isaias lv. 1), they will come. *Perhaps* when the hungry ones know that I am the Bread of Life, and that "he that cometh to me shall not hunger," they will say: "Lord, give us always this Bread" (St. John vi. 34, 35). *Perhaps* when they know that I am standing knocking at the door of their heart, they will open it. *Perhaps* when they hear Me say: "My child, give Me thy heart," they will give it.

Perhaps, perhaps! but oh, how often is the loving Heart of JESUS disappointed! How often is He kept there standing with His Hands full of gifts, and no one seems to care!

There may be something in this word *perhaps* that has a message for me, although it may be true that I have been receiving His gifts all my life. Is there no room for a "*perhaps*" in His mind with regard to my Communions? Am I satisfying His hunger and thirst for my love by the love I am giving Him in return?

I have offered that soul the best of My gifts. She will not reject it—oh no, but will she come just as a matter of course and routine, with a formal preparation before and thanksgiving after, or will there be more heart-work about it? Perhaps she will think a little of what that Gift cost Me, and she will give Me something to make up; perhaps she will be so hungry and thirsty for the Gift that she is going to receive to-morrow that she will often

think of it to-day, and even long for the moment to come, as I do. *Perhaps?* Perhaps she will keep her mind fixed on Me after I have given her the Gift of Myself, and will really converse with Me as if she loved Me, feeling the time all too short that I can stay with her. *Perhaps?*

Oh, when shall I realise that the Sacred Heart of JESUS is a human heart, thirsting for the love of another human heart, even of mine? When shall I realise the value of the precious Gift which the Church to-morrow will delight to honour? When shall I remove all doubt from the Heart of JESUS with regard to my loyalty and love? "If thou didst *know*." One day "I *shall* know, even as I am known" (1 Cor. xiii. 12), and then I shall love Him as He deserves to be loved. Meanwhile, such is my frailty that I do not wonder that He puts in that little word *perhaps*. But on my side I am determined—and it shall be the grace I will ask for all through the season of Corpus Christi—that there shall be no "*perhaps*" about my will and my desire and my intention, however far short they may come and however inadequate they may be.

Colloquy with Him Who says to me: Give Me to drink.

Resolution. To give Him no chance of saying "*perhaps*" to-day.

Spiritual Bouquet. "If thou didst know the Gift of GOD thou perhaps wouldst have asked of Him."

"THE GIFT THAT I WILL GIVE"

Feast of Corpus Christi.

"*Cibavit eos ex adipe frumenti.*" He fed them with the fat of wheat. (From the "Introit.")

1*st Prelude.* The Altar on the Feast of Corpus Christi.
2*nd Prelude.* Grace to "discern the Body of the Lord." (From the "Epistle.")

Point I.—"All Things are Ready"

To-day is the King's Feast Day, and He is holding His Court. For a whole week He will be sitting to receive the homage of His faithful subjects. We have lately been keeping the Feast of the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity. Now we are going to keep the Feast of the Second Person.

"All things are ready. Come!" Such is the King's invitation. It is the King Himself Who has made all ready. He prepared the Feast with His Own Hands. How? He left His Throne in Heaven. He took our flesh, that He might suffer and die in it, and so redeem us to God by the shedding of His most precious Blood. He founded the Church, making Himself the Head of that mystical body. He sent the Holy Spirit to dwell for ever in the Church, making her infallible by inspiring and ratifying all that she should say and do. But much though all this was, it was not enough. The members had to be united to the Head; it was necessary that there should be a bond between them—something to keep

them close to one another, something also to nourish them and maintain their strength, and thus make them worthy members of the mystical body, strong and full of vigour. How could this be managed? How could indissoluble bonds be made between the Head and the members? What nourishment could be found which would be sufficient to sustain every member of the mystical body during all the time of its pilgrimage? Our JESUS solved the difficulty. "The Bread that I will give is My Flesh; he that eateth Me, the same shall live by Me; he that eateth this Bread shall live for ever; that they all may be one; *I in them*" (St. John vi. 52, 58, 59; xvii. 21, 23).

All things are ready—the great sign of unity is there; they are all eating of the same spiritual food, "breaking bread from house to house with gladness and simplicity of heart" (Acts ii. 46). "Being many (they) are one bread" (1. Cor. x. 17), and each member is linked securely to the Head.

All things are ready—they are always ready, for He left the power to His Church to do as He had done—to work the stupendous miracle that He had worked, to multiply the Bread that His children might ever be fed. "Lord, give us always this Bread" (St. John vi. 34). Yes, *always*. It is a miracle which will continue as long as the world lasts. The children will ask for their "daily bread," and they will never ask in vain.

All things are ready—JESUS has given His best, His greatest Gift, His Gift of Love, Himself. His Sacred Humanity will abide with us as long as the world lasts. "As the Father hath loved Me, so I also have loved you" (chap. xv. 9). He has fulfilled His promise: "I will set My Tabernacle in the midst of you" (Lev. xxvi. 11).

This is the Gift for which the whole Church is thanking and blessing GOD to-day. It is to honour the Blessed Sacrament that the faithful will be

found to-day entering "into His gates with praise and into His courts with hymns" (Ps. xcix. 4). It is because they want to show their gratitude to the King of kings for His inestimable Gift that they will take Him out of the Tabernacle which He has set in their midst and will carry Him in triumphal procession through villages and cities, fields and streets, compelling the notice of the ignorant, the indifferent, the careless, and saying to them: "Is it nothing to you, all you that pass by? Behold your King!" And the King's Heart will go out in love to these wanderers from His fold, and He will bless them—yea, even them also.

Let us, as we mingle our praises with those of the great multitude which in Heaven and earth is delighting to honour its King to-day, unite our hearts to the Heart of JESUS, and pray for His intentions, which must surely be that all should know that their GOD is dwelling among them.

Point II.—"COME"

It is the King's personal invitation to each individual member of His Kingdom. "Come, eat My Bread and drink the Wine which I have mingled for *you*" (Prov. ix. 5). All things are ready; I have done My part; what could I have done more? Now do yours, and come to the Feast which I have prepared. How have I answered this invitation in the past? How am I actually answering it to-day? How do I intend to answer it in the future? The Blessed Sacrament is the great Treasure of the Church, the Key to the Building, the Tree of Life, the Manna in the desert, the Well of Living Water, the Food of Angels, our Daily Bread, the Bread from Heaven, the Hidden Manna. Each of Its many and most wonderful names brings to my mind a fresh aspect of Its beauty, and invites me to meditate upon It, for each one is for *me*. What my attitude towards

the Blessed Sacrament is, is of the greatest importance—not just to-day, when it is comparatively easy to join the great multitude and sing Its praises, but habitually. If I want to find a reason for the different degrees of spirituality which exist among Christ's members, let me see what is their attitude towards the Blessed Sacrament—what place It holds in their lives. All are united to the Head, or they would not be members at all, but why are there so "many infirm and weak," and why do "many sleep"? St. Paul is very explicit, he tells us that it is because they do not discern the Body of the Lord (1 Cor. xi. 29, 30). They are united in body, but there is no union of soul. The Blessed Sacrament is not to them what Our Lord intended it to be. They do not understand that, if they would keep the union close between themselves and their Head, they must come, and come often, to eat of His Bread and drink of the Wine that He has mingled for them.

I do not want to place myself amongst the infirm and weak and sleepy members of the mystical body, and yet I know that the Blessed Sacrament might be so much more to me than It is. Is It to me a constant memorial of the great Sacrifice that was made on Calvary for me? Is It a bond of union between my soul and Christ, drawing me ever closer and closer to Him, linking me at the same time to all His other members, and making us all "one body" partaking of the one Bread? Do I regard it as the Food which is a necessity to the spiritual growth and development of my soul? Do I often dwell on the fact that it is by means of the Blessed Sacrament that Christ will form Himself in me and that He will form me a new creature in Him? That by Its means I actually partake of the Divine Nature as He partook of my human nature? That It is to me a pledge of immortality? That Christ will, if I will let Him, live His life in me, so that it is "no longer I who live, but Christ Who liveth in me"? All, all I need

is assured to me by this wonderful Banquet that Christ has prepared for me.

Come, then, and get the strength which will enable you to be a dutiful child of God. *Come*, and by actually partaking of His Flesh and His Blood, learn what is the spirit of your Elder Brother, that there may be some likeness between the adopted son and Him Who has made you a co-heir with Himself. *Come* to the Table at which the Holy Spirit is always presiding, for without His Presence in the Church the Banquet could never have been provided; *come* and eat the Food which will make you strong and give you courage to be a disciple of the Holy Ghost, using all His sevenfold gifts and obeying all His injunctions.

Colloquy with each of the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity, thanking each separately for the ineffable Banquet which they have prepared for me to-day.

Resolution. To determine more than ever I have done before to " discern the Body of the Lord."

Spiritual Bouquet. " All things are ready. Come ! " (St. Matt. xxii. 4).

ADORO TE (1)

Friday within the Octave of Corpus Christi.

Adoro Te devote latens Deitas
Quæ sub his figuris vere latitas.
Tibi se cor meum totum subjicit,
Quia Te contemplans totum deficit.

I adore Thee devotedly, hidden Deity, Who art truly hidden under these forms. My whole heart submits itself to Thee, because contemplating Thee it loses itself.

During this blest week we want to meditate in such a way that our love and devotion for the Blessed Sacrament may be increased. We want subjects that will bring us into the presence of the Blessed Sacrament and leave us there. And for this we cannot do better than take St. Thomas Aquinas' hymn, which we have taken, perhaps, often before, but which seems somehow to come spontaneously to our minds when we kneel before the Blessed Sacrament. We will take it "according to the second method of praying,"[1] as being the one most calculated, perhaps, to aid our devotion and keep us in God's presence, and this is, surely, the end of all meditation.

Adoro Te. Adoration cannot but be my first thought as soon as I realise that I am in the actual presence of my King and my God. "I am in Heaven, thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few." Yes, dear Lord, but Thou art also upon earth—not many yards from me; and Thou hast

[1] A method which "consists in considering the signification of each word of a prayer" (St. Ignatius).

come on purpose that I may never feel that Thou art a "GOD afar off," but nigh at hand—here in the midst, as close to me and as really present as any friend whom I may go to visit in his room.

DEVOTE. *Devotedly* I adore Thee, that is, as he should who is dedicated to Thee, who has given up, or is prepared to give up, everything for Thee, who is faithful to Thee and attached to Thy service, who is set apart for Thee in a way which means, if it means anything, that it would be a *desecration* to put himself at the service of another. Here I am, dear Lord, Thy devoted slave, content to bask for a little while in the sunshine of Thy presence, content to know that every part of me—body and soul—belongs to Thee, rejoicing in the fact that Thou hast a right to me, to every talent that I possess, to every moment of my time, revelling in the thought that Thou lovest me and carest for my smallest interests, that my unworthiness or worthiness is all the same to Thee—that what Thou dost want and crave for is that I should come to Thee. Here I am, then, adoring Thee devotedly.

LATENS DEITAS. Yes, *hidden*—but the word has become a precious one to me. All my best things are hidden—the hidden life is the best life, the "treasure hid in the field" was worth more than all the other treasures; and so I am not surprised to find that Thou art "a GOD Who hidest Thyself." It is for the joy of being sought that Thou dost hide Thyself, my JESUS, and for the greater joy still of revealing Thyself to those who seek Thee. Oh, reveal Thyself to me! I know that Thou art the great and holy GOD, but I know that Thou lovest "little ones" and wilt reveal to them secrets which Thou hidest from the wise and prudent (St. Matt. xi. 25). I wait now in Thy presence. Reveal Thy secrets to me. Teach me how to be really a little one—how to be simple, dependent, loving, trustful, with no will or ideas of my own. Here it is easy,

but it will not be so easy when these blest moments which I can spend in Thy presence are over. O Thou hidden God, make the union between Thyself and Thy little creature so real that I shall go out into the world again charged with Thy presence, doing everything that I have to do—not alone—but with Thee, for Thee and in Thee.

QUÆ SUB HIS FIGURIS VERE LATITAS. *Which (Deity) indeed lies hidden under these species.* Why does GOD hide Himself under forms and species? Simply because He wants me to come near Him, and He makes it possible by hiding Himself. If He did not do so, all access to Him would be impossible; sinful man could never approach the Deity. Moses, with whom GOD spoke "face to face, as a man is wont to speak with his friend" (Exod. xxxiii. 11), was very anxious to see GOD and to know Him still more. "Show me Thy Face that I may know Thee," he cried in his desire after GOD. But no, it could not be: "Thou canst not see My Face, for man shall not see Me and live" (ver. 20). GOD, however, appreciated the desire of His servant, and He made a special arrangement so that he could see more of Him. "When My glory shall pass, I will set thee in a hole of the rock and protect thee with My Right Hand till I pass." How gracious! How condescending! But how much more so is He to me! He has hidden Himself under species upon which I can and may gaze when I will, with a heart full of loving gratitude, while I say: "My Lord and my GOD"—hidden there for me, so that I may approach without any fear.

TIBI SE COR MEUM TOTUM SUBJICIT. *To Thee my whole heart subjects itself.* It could not be otherwise—the more I think about Him in the Blessed Sacrament, the more anxious I become to be really His devoted slave, really His "little one." This subjection can only come from *love*—it is the *heart* that has to submit itself. Let me remember this—

that any want of submission to His dealings with me, to His plans for me, is due to want of love. O my JESUS, as I kneel before Thee in the Blessed Sacrament, kindle in my cold heart the fire of Thine Own Heart, burning with love for me, and then ask what Thou wilt.

QUIA TE CONTEMPLANS TOTUM DEFICIT. *Because, contemplating Thee, my whole heart is wanting, fails, vanishes.* Where does it vanish? Into the Heart of JESUS, to lose itself there. It is the state David describes as fainting in GOD's presence (Ps. lxxii. 26). And this, St. Thomas says, is the result of contemplating GOD in the Blessed Sacrament. The union is so perfect that the soul is lost in Him. What do I know about it—I who, perhaps, am so often in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament? Do I know what it is to contemplate GOD till self is forgotten? Do all the little petty troubles and hurt feelings gradually die away? Do they assume altogether different proportions—the overwhelming thought of the greatness of GOD leaving room for few other thoughts? St. Thomas Aquinas evidently expects this to be the result of my Visits to the Blessed Sacrament. Let me examine myself and see whether I can claim any such result as this. Am I less touchy, less sensitive, less exacting, less occupied in every way with myself after my Visits? It must be so if I have really been contemplating GOD, really having my whole heart engaged with Him. In proportion to the contemplation of my GOD in the Blessed Sacrament will be the annihilation of myself.

Colloquy with JESUS in the Blessed Sacrament.

ADORO TE (2)

Saturday within the Octave of Corpus Christi.

Visus, gustus, tactus in Te fallitur Sed auditu solo tuto creditur. Credo quidquid dixit Dei Filius. Nil hoc verbo veritatis verius.	Sight, taste, touch are duped in Thee; but by hearing alone we may safely believe. I believe whatever the Son of GOD has said. Nothing can be truer than the word of truth.

VISUS, GUSTUS, TACTUS IN TE FALLITUR. *Sight, taste, touch are duped in Thee.* As I look at the Sacred Host at Mass or Benediction or Exposition my eyes tell me nothing about Him Who is hidden there. When I taste It, there is no sweetness to be detected by the natural sense, though It contains "in Itself all sweetness." When the little Host is laid upon my tongue, the sense of touch does not help me to find out my hidden GOD. No, the supernatural is not discerned naturally—we have to "discern the Lord's Body," but not through the senses of sight, taste and touch. These do not help at all; they tell us nothing; as far as they are concerned the little Host is the same after Consecration as before.

SED AUDITU SOLO TUTO CREDITUR. *But by the hearing alone it is safely believed.* But there is another sense—that of *hearing*, and through that, and that alone, I can learn about my GOD, Who is hidden in the Blessed Sacrament. How can this be? St. Paul explains that "faith cometh by hearing"

(Rom. x. 17). We perhaps may say that faith can come without the sense of hearing—that we can *read* of it, for example. But this does not alter the great principle which was given by Our Lord Himself to the Church: "Go and teach all nations." "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me." "As the Father hath sent Me, so send I you." The Father sent Him to tell the good tidings, and He sent His Apostles to do the same. "He that *heareth* you *heareth* Me." "Faith comes by *hearing*." "How shall they hear without a preacher, and how shall they preach unless they be sent?" The Church to-day consists of the Teaching Church and the *Hearing* Church, as it always has; and this is the simple method which Christ ordained, so that the little ones of His Kingdom might learn their Faith.

Let me, while I kneel here before the Blessed Sacrament, thank our dear Lord once more that I am a child of the Church, that ears to hear have been given to me, and that faith has come to me through hearing. And let me remember, too, the many who believe not because they have not heard; and pray that the Gospel of Peace may be preached unto the ends of the whole world (vers. 15 and 18).

CREDO QUIDQUID DIXIT DEI FILIUS. *I believe whatever the Son of* GOD *has said*, because "hearing (comes) by the word of Christ" (ver. 17). What did He say? Many things about the faith which He "delivered once for all" to the Church; but here in this hymn of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, St. Thomas is thinking of one particular truth which comes from hearing what the Son of God has said—namely, the truth contained in these words: "This is My Body. This is My Blood." Once again let me humbly, thankfully and joyfully make an Act of Faith in the Blessed Sacrament: "I believe whatever the Son of GOD said."

NIL HOC VERBO VERITATIS VERIUS. *Nothing is truer than the word of truth.* In spite of all the

heresies that have gathered round it, it remains like a rock, and one after another hears the word of truth in such a way that he believes. The words "This is My Body" become the centre of his life. They take a new meaning; he wonders how he could ever have seen any other in them! Christ Himself has spoken to him, "*Ephpheta*," and his ears have been opened; faith has come to him, and the word of truth—of the Truth Itself—is precious to Him beyond everything else. "Nothing can be truer than the word of truth. I believe whatever the Son of GOD has said." "I do believe, Lord. Help my unbelief" (St. Mark ix. 23).

And as I kneel before the Blessed Sacrament, thanking GOD for the inestimable gift of Faith, and begging that I may never trifle with it, let me remember that it is not only where the great doctrines of the Church are concerned that faith comes by hearing, but also in the little details of my life. How many of these reach me through the words of others! Let my faith be quick to detect the commands of Christ reaching me through my hearing, and remember that Faith is obedience. Faith always recognises His Voice.

More and more as I kneel here it comes home to me that Thou art a GOD Who hidest Thyself. So securely dost Thou hide Thyself that the senses of sight, hearing and touch, which are given me to help me to perceive other things, are of no use here; and it is all because Thou didst want Thy child to live by *Faith*. "Blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed." God wants the little ones to believe because He says so, not because they see and understand. Keep me, dear Lord, ever a little one.

Colloquy with JESUS in the Blessed Sacrament.

ADORO TE (3)

Sunday within the Octave of Corpus Christi.

In cruce latebat sola Deitas	On the Cross the Deity only
At hic latet simul et Humanitas.	was hidden, but here the Humanity is hidden at the
Ambo tamen credens atque confitens,	same time; yet believing and confessing both, I seek
Peto quod petivit latro pœnitens.	what the penitent thief sought.

In cruce latebat sola Deitas. *On the Cross the Deity only was hidden.* Our Blessed Lord died, as He had been born and as He had lived—a Man like unto ourselves. His Humanity was there for all to see, and it helped those who had faith, to discern the Deity that lay hidden. It was meant to be a help. It was because God wanted to reveal Himself to man that He became man. His beauty, His perfections, His miracles, His words, His sufferings, His death—all were intended to reveal the hidden God. For the most part, men's eyes were holden, and the Sacred Humanity told them nothing, though it struck them sometimes that there was something there beyond the ordinary. "Who is this that even the winds and the seas obey Him?" "Who is this that openeth the eyes of the blind?" "Never man spake like this Man." And one who saw Him die exclaimed: "Indeed this Man was the Son of God." The Centurion found, as St. Peter, St. Thomas, Martha and a few other privileged souls had done, the Divinity hidden under the Humanity.

But nevertheless it *was* hidden, and only visible to the eyes of faith. Our Lady was perhaps the only one amongst all the witnesses of the Crucifixion who knew with any "real apprehension" that GOD was dying on the Cross.

AT HIC LATET SIMUL ET HUMANITAS. *But here the Humanity is hidden as well.* Here in the Blessed Sacrament the little Host speaks to the natural senses neither of man nor GOD; the Humanity and the Divinity are both alike hidden. Both are to be discerned by *faith* alone. Our Lord said: "This is My Body," therefore it *is* His Body, His Blood, His Soul—and, by the Hypostatic union which joins the two natures inseparably, His Divinity, too.

AMBO TAMEN CREDENS ATQUE CONFITENS. *Yet believing and confessing both,* by GOD's grace and goodness to me. Let me never forget that faith is a *gift*—one of the precious gifts infused into my soul at Baptism by the Holy Spirit—and let me often thank Him for that gift of His pure bounty, which has made such a difference to my life. Very precious to Him are Acts of Faith. Part of the time we spend before the Blessed Sacrament should surely be spent in *confessing* our Faith in the Humanity and the Divinity of Him Who dwells in the Tabernacle.

PETO QUOD PETIVIT LATRO PŒNITENS. *I seek what the penitent thief sought.* The penitent thief *believed*—his faith was great enough to pierce the veil which hid the Divinity, and to make him address the Man dying at his side as his GOD—he *confessed* Him too before his companion and before all who were gathered there: "This Man hath done no evil." And then he presented his petition: "Lord, remember me when Thou shalt come into Thy Kingdom."

I seek what the penitent thief sought. I am as close to JESUS as he was. With the eye of faith I

watch Him die too, for do I not assist at Calvary whenever I assist at Holy Mass? There I see Him lifted up and drawing all men to Himself—there I see my GOD dying for me; and as I kneel here before the Blessed Sacrament I try to realise it all, and to thank Him once again for His exceeding love. My opportunities are greater than the penitent thief's. GOD has not made *me* wait till the end of my life, before giving me the gift of faith and teaching me where to find my hidden GOD. How am I using my greater opportunities? What about my petition? I seek what the penitent thief sought. What did he seek, and how did he seek it? What was there about that short prayer at the end of a wasted life that was so efficacious?

(1) *Adoration.*—He left off blaspheming and tried to make his companion do the same: "Neither dost thou fear GOD, seeing thou art under the same condemnation." He had probably never thought anything about GOD before—now he reverenced and adored Him, and was hurt by the blasphemy of his companion. Is my adoration such that I naturally think of those who are not adoring Him, that I am hurt by anything that can hurt the Heart of JESUS, and that I try to make reparation?

(2) *Contrition.*—"We indeed (suffer) justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds." He acknowledged his sin and offered his sufferings in reparation. It was evidently a satisfaction to him to suffer. Does my contrition go as far as this, or does it stop at words and purposes of amendment? In proportion as it is real and heartfelt will be my satisfaction at anything that I may have to suffer and about which I can say gladly: Oh, take this to make up, it is my "due reward"—just indeed—but I offer it to Thee.

(3) *Faith* in the Humanity and in the Divinity.—"This Man hath done no evil." "Lord, remember me." Acts of Faith should enter into all our prayers.

One of the surest ways of preserving our faith is to make frequent Acts of Faith.

(4) *Humility* and *Love.*—"And he said to JESUS: Lord, remember me when Thou shalt come into Thy Kingdom." He was quite sure that He was a King and had a Kingdom. He believed with all his heart the inscription written above the Cross: "*This is JESUS, the King of the Jews.*" If He is a King He has a kingdom, and I should like to be a member of it. I will ask Him. His humility would not let him ask "to sit on the right hand or on the left"—but he asked to be *remembered!* He felt that if only he could find a place in that *Heart* all would be well, and the love, which had sprung up at first sight, would be satisfied.

Such are the prayers that touch the Heart of JESUS—prayers full of confidence and love. "And JESUS said to him: Amen, I say to thee: This day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise." What an answer to all his hopes and longings! What a satisfying of his love! "With Me." It was all he wanted—never again to be separated from Him to Whom he owed all. Cannot I with the ears of faith hear JESUS saying something of the same sort to me, as my Visit to the Blessed Sacrament is closing: You have to go now, My child, your duties call you away, but to-day you shall be *with Me?* There is no separation really between those who love. I will be close at your side all the day, doing everything with you, and you will be referring everything to Me. Try it just for *to-day*, and you will find that your *Paradise* has begun even on earth.

Colloquy. "My JESUS, I believe that Thou art truly present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I adore Thee; I am sorry that I have offended Thee; I love Thee. Come to my poor soul. Unite Thyself to me. . . . I thank Thee, my JESUS. Oh, never, never leave me!"

ADORO TE (4)

Monday within the Octave of Corpus Christi.

Plagas sicut Thomas non intueor
Deum tamen meum Te confiteor;
Fac me Tibi semper magis credere,
In Te spem habere, Te diligere.

I do not see Thy wounds as Thomas did, yet I confess Thee to be my GOD. Grant that I may always believe in Thee more, hope in Thee more and love Thee more.

PLAGAS SICUT THOMAS NON INTUEOR. *I do not see Thy wounds as Thomas did.* Thomas insisted on seeing them, and openly declared that he would not believe till he had, and he remained a whole week in a state of wilful doubt rather than confess without the proof of his senses, that his Master was his GOD. "Except I shall see in His Hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His Side, I *will not* believe" (St. John xx. 25). Of course Thomas was wrong thus to hold out, but was it not love for his Master that kept him back? He longed to believe that all was true, but it seemed too good to be true—he dared not let himself believe. Our Lord understood His disciple's point of view—his love, his desire, his fear—and all were precious to Him, and He did not break the bruised reed (Isaias xlii. 3) that was bending under the weight of the doubt. After His greeting: "Peace be to you," He said to Thomas: "Put in thy finger hither and see My Hands, and bring hither thy hand and put it into

My Side, and be not faithless, but believing." Thomas had not had sufficient faith to believe by means of the sense of hearing only, though the words he heard had come to him through the lips of Our Lady herself and those of the Apostles. Now he had an opportunity of convincing himself of the truth by means of the senses of sight and touch. At the sight of the wounds all doubt vanished, and from the depths of his loving heart came the confession: "My Lord and my GOD." After all, Thomas only demanded the proofs which the others had had a week ago, but he should not have said that he would not believe without them, and his Master rebuked him for his doubt: "Because thou hast seen Me, Thomas, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen and have believed." And so every time that we look upon the uplifted Host we get that blessing—the blessing given by the Church to those who, without the aid of any of the senses, say by faith with Thomas: "My Lord and my GOD."

DEUM TAMEN MEUM TE CONFITEOR. *Yet I confess Thee to be my God.* It is a personal matter. I not only confess my belief in the fact that the little Host is GOD, but also that It is *my* GOD. My faith is so strong that, as I kneel before the Blessed Sacrament, I can see Him there, wounded, bleeding, dying for me. I can gaze at the wounds in Hands and Feet and Side. I can thrust my hand into that blessed cavity and feel the beatings of the Sacred Heart, while, in an ecstasy of love and gratitude, I cry out: "*My* Lord and *my* GOD,"—mine because "He loved me and gave Himself for me," and now out of love for me dwells always here in the Tabernacle, that I may have Him ever at my side. Is it all thus a reality to me? If not it is *faith* that is lacking, and I must continue my prayer:—

FAC ME TIBI SEMPER MAGIS CREDERE. *Grant that I may ever have more faith in Thee. More* faith—that is what is needed. It is the want of faith really

which is at the bottom of all my difficulties and troubles. I have got the gift of faith—it was given to me at my Baptism, and I use it when I say my Creed, and when I make Acts of Faith; but this is not all—faith must go further. It was faith which made the Sunamitess answer: "*Well*," when she was asked the question: "Is it well with thy son?" though she knew that he was lying dead upon the Prophet's bed (4 Kings iv. 26). It was faith which made holy Job, when troubles fell thick and fast upon him, say: "As it hath pleased the Lord so is it done. Blessed be the Name of the Lord" (Job i. 21). "Faith can sing through days of sorrow: All must be well." It was want of faith which made the Apostles so afraid during the storm at sea when JESUS was asleep. "They awaked Him, saying: Lord, save us, we perish. And JESUS said to them: Why are you fearful, O ye of little faith?" (St. Matt. viii. 25, 26), or, as St. Mark has it: "Have you not faith *yet*"—after all your experience of Me? Now do I begin to understand what it means, and why it is so necessary for me to pray for more faith? My faith ought to be strong enough to believe that JESUS is always with me in the boat, and that therefore, be the weather what it may, all must be well. "Who is this that He commandeth both the winds and the sea, and they obey Him?" (St. Luke viii. 25). It is my JESUS, Who ever lives for me in the Blessed Sacrament, and Who controls all the manifold changes of my life, and Who will, if I will let Him, create "a great calm" always in my heart. Here before the Blessed Sacrament I shall get the power to let Him; and what is that power? *Faith. Fac me Tibi semper magis credere.*

IN TE SPEM HABERE, TE DILIGERE. *Grant that I may also have more hope and more love.* When faith is strong, hope and love will be strong too. As faith pierces within the veil and sees all the good things that GOD has prepared for them that love Him,

the hope that all these good things may be mine is bound to follow. And in proportion as the faith is great enough to see, will be the love for Him Who has prepared for His children, more than it is possible for the heart of man to conceive. Do Thou then, dear Lord, increase my faith, increase my hope and increase my charity. I cannot utter a prayer that is more pleasing to Thee than this. And though faith comes first, and the other two depend on it, yet love is the best and the greatest gift—it will last on through all eternity, when the need for the others has passed away. Give me then, dear Lord, more love.

Colloquy. With "Him Who loved me and gave Himself for me"—and Who is longing for my love.

ADORO TE (5)

Tuesday within the Octave of Corpus Christi.

O memoriale mortis Domini;
Panis vivens, vitam præstans homini!
Præsta meæ menti de Te vivere,
Et Te illi semper dulce sapere.

O reminder of the death of the Lord; living Bread, affording life to man! Grant that my soul may live by Thee, and always taste Thee sweetly.

O MEMORIALE MORTIS DOMINI. "Do this for a commemoration of Me" (St. Luke xxii. 19), that is, offer the Holy Mass in commemoration of Me; let it remind you of My death; keep My death always before you. Let each part of the Mass speak to you of the Sacrifice on Calvary. Take your stand with the Blessed Mother at the Foot of the Altar, and watch the representation of the death—the mystical death—of Christ, set forth by the two Consecrations—the separation (not in reality, but in figure) of the Body and the Blood, which signifies death. See Him slowly lifted up by the hand of the Priest for all to see, and think of the Cross being raised from the ground with the Victim of the world's salvation nailed to it. "As often as you shall eat this Bread, and drink the Chalice, you shall *show the death of the Lord*, until He come" (1 Cor. xi. 26). How does the Priest's Communion *show* the death of Christ? By being the consummation of the Sacrifice—he is partaking of the Sacrifice which he has offered, by feeding on the Victim. And my Communions, too, show forth the death of Christ. I, too, feed upon the Victim slain yet ever living.

When JESUS comes to me in Holy Communion, He comes as the Victim slain for me; and thus each Communion should be to me a *reminder* of His death. Perhaps I am rather apt to lose sight of this aspect of my Communions—and yet it is a very important one, for He comes to unite Himself to me —to make me a partaker in His death, to give me strength to live a crucified life with Him and to be a co-victim with Him.

PANIS VIVENS. *Living Bread.* The Victim *slain* and yet the *living* Bread. Though the Blessed Sacrament is a memorial of Christ dying, it is Christ living Who is present here. "Behold, I am alive for evermore," and He is here to be the *Food* of His children—to be their "*daily Bread.*" This aspect of Holy Communion—and it is the principal one—is strongly brought before us in the Mass for Corpus Christi :—

Introit. "He fed them with the fat of wheat and filled them with honey out of the rock."

Epistle. "Let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of the chalice."

Gradual. "Thou givest them food in due season."
"My Flesh is meat indeed and My Blood is drink indeed."

Sequence. The living and life-giving Bread.
The Flesh is food, the Blood is drink.
The Bread of Angels.
The Food of Pilgrims.
The Children's Bread.
Foreshown by the Manna given to our fathers.
JESUS, the True Bread, have mercy on us and feed us.

Gospel. This is the Bread that came down from Heaven.
He that eateth this Bread shall live for ever.

Offertory. The Priests of the Lord offer unto God the burnt offering and loaves.

Communion. "As often as ye shall eat this Bread, and drink this Chalice, ye shall show the death of the Lord."

VITAM PRÆSTANS HOMINI. *Affording life to man.* He is not only the living Bread, but also the Bread which sustains life. "If any man eat of this Bread he shall live for ever." "Except you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man you shall not have life in you." No wonder the disciples cried out: "Lord, always give us this Bread." And He will. "Lo, I am with you all days," to be your "daily Bread," sustaining your life all through your pilgrimage on earth; and when the journey is well-nigh over, and strength and courage for the last few steps are failing, the Food will be there to strengthen and console, for it is a *command* of the Church that each of the faithful in danger of death shall receive the *Holy Viaticum*—the food for the last journey.

O my JESUS, how can I ever thank Thee enough for the provision Thou hast made for me in the Blessed Sacrament!

PRÆSTA MEÆ MENTI DE TE VIVERE. *Grant that my soul may live by Thee.* This prayer is the connecting link between the Living Bread and the Life-giving Bread. Thou, my JESUS, art the Living Bread, Thou art also the Bread that gives life; now grant that I may live by Thee—that I may use my opportunities, may realise that that Bread is for *me*, to sustain *my* life, and that if I do not use It and assimilate It, I shall soon have no life in me—"He that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me." The union between us will be so intimate that our lives will be blended. He will take up my life into His life and let me live it with Him and through Him,

so that it is no longer I who live, no longer I who speak, no longer I who act, no longer I who suffer, but Christ Who doeth all in me. This is what He intends to be the result of Holy Communion—an intimate union between the soul and Himself. Oh, how far short my daily Communions are from what He intended them to be! But I will not be discouraged. I will do my best to avoid routine, and I will remember that though I may not feel it nor realise it, each Communion is an opportunity which I give to JESUS of making my soul a little more like what He wants it to be, of increasing the union between us; and I may be quite sure that He does not lose *His* opportunities, though I may lose mine. The Communion and its effects do not depend entirely upon *me*. So I will bring my heart to Him each day, as He asks, just as it is, with all its defects, and say: Here is my heart, dear Lord; Thou didst ask for it, do just what Thou wilt with it—work in it, live in it and make it at each visit a little more like Thine Own.

But what about those who would fain go to Holy Communion every day, but who are prevented by duty or by feeble health or by distance from a church? They cannot live by JESUS CHRIST in the same way? Why not? What is a *day* to Him Who is infinite and eternal? Cannot He Who arranged that the Manna gathered on the day before the Sabbath should last forty-eight hours instead of twenty-four, arrange that the Food He gives His suffering and deprived children shall last till the next time they are able to gather it? Is His Hand shortened? Is He tied down to our little ideas of time? Did not He make the food He gave to Elias strong enough to last forty days and forty nights? Let us then have faith, and believe that all these things—even infrequency of Communion—are arranged by Him, and do not let us prove by our repinings and complaints that we prefer our own will to His.

His Holy Will should be more precious to us even than our Communions; and if this is so, He will more than make up for any sacrifice that He calls upon us to make for Him.

ET TE ILLI SEMPER DULCE SAPERE. *Grant that I may always taste Thee sweetly.* This I may do whether my Communion is frequent or—through no fault of my own—infrequent. I can go back to my last Communion and taste its sweetness over again. I can make a *Spiritual Communion* every day, and if I will, many times a day. What better method can there be of realising God's Presence than of putting myself in spirit before the Tabernacle, and asking Him to come and unite Himself to me, and then thanking Him for coming, while I taste His sweetness? It is the *desire* of His children to receive Him and to unite themselves to Him, which is so precious to Him Whose delight is to be with them. And I can give this delight to His Heart whenever I like by making a Spiritual Communion.

"Panem de cœlis præstitisti
Omnem delectamentum in se habentem."

Colloquy:—

"Grant my spirit ever by Thy life may live,
To my taste Thy sweetness never failing give."

ADORO TE (6)

Wednesday within the Octave of Corpus Christi.

Pie Pelicane, Jesu Domine!
Me immundum munda Tuo Sanguine;
Cujus una stilla salvum facere
Totum mundum quit ab omni scelere.

O devoted Pelican, Jesus my Lord! Cleanse me the unclean in Thy Blood; one drop of which is sufficient to save the whole world from every crime.

Pie Pelicane, Jesu Domine! *O devoted Pelican, Jesus, my Lord.* St. Thomas has in his mind the well-known picture of the Pelican allowing her young to feed by drawing the blood from her breast. It was one of the many symbols used by the early Christians in the Catacombs, and signified Jesus allowing His children to feed on His Own Blood in Holy Communion. The picture is one which speaks of self-sacrifice, love and devotion to an extent which seems almost incomprehensible; and this is why, my Jesus, it speaks to me of Thee. Thy love and devotion to Thy children are past all comprehension—"How can this Man give us His Flesh to eat?" Only love could devise a way; and that was the way of sacrifice. "Lo, I come to do Thy Will, O God—A body hast thou prepared Me—Obedient even unto death—Alive for evermore—This is My Body, take, eat—Lo, I am with you all days." Teach me, as I kneel here before Thee in the Blessed Sacrament, what sacrifice means, and make me long to have my share in it. Surely no day ought to pass

without my making some little conscious and voluntary sacrifice for Him, Who for love of me is content to be in the Tabernacle "*all days*, even to the consummation of the world." Let me make it a part of my examination of conscience each night: What sacrifice have I made for JESUS to-day? And if the answer is *none*, it is not too late—love can quickly devise one, and JESUS is there waiting for it and thirsting for it.

ME IMMUNDUM MUNDA TUO SANGUINE. *Cleanse me, the unclean, with Thy Blood.* I am a sinner, I feel the need of cleansing. Thy Precious Blood was shed for sinners; let it cleanse me now. The nearer we get to JESUS in the Blessed Sacrament the more His absolute purity strikes us—and as a contrast our own impurity. Then comes contrition once more for the past; a prayer to be cleansed "*yet more* from my iniquity"; and thanksgiving for the Fountain opened, which is always available for those who feel their need of it. A Visit to the Blessed Sacrament spent in saying "Me immundum munda Tuo Sanguine" is a Visit well spent.

CUJUS UNA STILLA SALVUM FACERE TOTUM MUNDUM QUIT AB OMNI SCELERE. *One drop of which is sufficient to cleanse the whole world from every stain.* Then why, my JESUS, didst Thou shed *every* drop? Why didst Thou shed it in the Garden of Gethsemani? Why didst Thou leave it on the cruel scourges, on the crown of thorns, on the soldiers' clothes, on the Prætorium steps, and all along the Way of the Cross to Calvary's Hill? Why didst Thou allow it to drip from Thy Head and Hands and Feet during all the three hours that Thou didst hang upon the Cross? And why, even after Thy death, as if to make sure that not *one* drop should remain unshed, didst Thou allow Thy Side to be pierced and Thy Sacred Heart to be opened and emptied? *One drop* would have been enough—why, then, this profusion, this recklessness, this *waste*, we might almost say?

We know the answer—it was the outcome of *love*. Love is profuse, love is reckless, love does not understand the word *waste*—it must give *all*, and cannot rest while there is anything more to give—"What more is there that I could have done?" Nothing, my JESUS, Thou hast loved *unto the end*—to the very limit—and because Thou art infinite there is no end and no limit—Who shall measure the love of GOD?

And this love was for *me*, who am kneeling here before the Blessed Sacrament. He loved *me* and shed *every drop* of His precious Blood for *me*. Love begets love. What return is this amazing love finding in me? Do I go to the very end of my strength, to the very end of my time, to the very end of my talents in His service? Or do I count the cost, and calculate and appeal to human prudence, and say: "Thus far shalt thou go and *no further*"? Why should I wear myself out? I get no thanks for it. Why should I give up so many things that I should so much prefer to do? Why waste my life as far as this world is concerned? Because *He* did. Is not that a sufficient answer for one whose life is bound up with the life of Christ, for one who is a co-victim with Him? How can He live His life in me if we are pulling two different ways? If He is generous and I am niggardly—if He is always seeing how much He can give and I how little? Let me remember that union with Christ in the Blessed Sacrament means that I am prepared to go to *any* length with Him, never troubling to count the cost. It means a real partnership, where both have the same ends in view, the same methods of attaining them, and where each can count on the other.

Oh, my JESUS, I want our partnership to be a real and solid one, but I fear that Thou canst not yet count on me as a partner; let me, however, be Thy little apprentice, and gradually teach me to do

things in Thy way, and so form me into what Thou dost want me to be!

Colloquy. "O, beloved Word of God, teach me to be generous, teach me to serve Thee as Thou deservest, to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labour and not to ask for any reward, save that of knowing that I do Thy Will."

ADORO TE (7)

Octave of Corpus Christi.

Jesu Quem velatum nunc aspicio, Oro fiat illud quod tam sitio, Ut Te revelata cernens facie, Visu sim beatus Tuæ gloriæ.	O Jesus, Whom I now see veiled, I pray that what I so thirst after may come to pass—that seeing Thee with Thy Face revealed I may be blessed with the sight of Thy glory.

Jesu Quem velatum nunc aspicio. *Jesus Whom (though) veiled I now see.* We have come to the end of our Meditations on Corpus Christi—and if the time spent before the Blessed Sacrament has impressed upon us one truth more than another, it perhaps is the truth that God intends us to walk by faith and not by sight during our pilgrimage through this world. Jesus will always be veiled, and our duty will always be to keep our faith strong enough to pierce through the veil and to recognise Him. And this does not apply only to the Blessed Sacrament—perhaps it is easier for faith to pierce the veil there than anywhere else, for it would be difficult to doubt in His very presence—but it applies also to the whole of our journey through this world. He is with us all the time, and if we have faith enough to see Him, the whole aspect of our pilgrimage is changed. It is no longer solitary and painful and difficult and long; it is a journey with a Friend Who is dearer to us than a brother. No one troubles to think about the unpleasantness of a journey if

he is travelling with some one he loves. And in our case He Whom we love is not only with us, sharing all and bearing all with us, but it is He Who has arranged every detail of the journey, so if there are difficulties I may say that He has permitted them, if the companions are uncongenial I may say that He is behind them, if the journey is long, cold, dark, desolate, painful I can truthfully say that it is His Will that it should be so—nothing happens to me without Him—in other words, He veils Himself under every circumstance of my life. Was ever a journey so lovingly thought out and planned as mine? Instead of complaining of the people I have to travel with, of the places I have to pass through, of the difficulties and perplexities of the journey, let me say: *Jesus Quem velatum nunc aspicio.*

Oro fiat illud quod tam sitio. *I ask that I may have what I thirst for.* It is a strong word this word *Sitio*, and must ever speak to us of the thirst of Jesus on the Cross. He thirsted then for souls. He thirsted for *me*—for my love—and when my love for Him is great enough to become a thirst after Him, I am satisfying in a small measure His thirst for my love. Let me when I kneel before the Blessed Sacrament, or when I am preparing for Holy Communion, never forget to make Acts of *desire*—they are very precious to the Heart of Jesus, and they help to *create* a desire—"As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so my soul panteth after Thee, O God."

Ut Te revelata cernens facie, visu sim beatus Tuæ gloriæ. *That seeing Thee with Thy Face revealed, I may be blessed with the sight of Thy glory.* One day the veil will be removed and His children will see His Face, for they shall see Him as He is—no longer "through a glass in a dark manner, but face to face" (1 Cor. xiii. 12). And my desire is that this happy lot may be mine. I am praying then before the Blessed Sacrament that I

may fulfil the end for which GOD created me, that I may, as the Catechism says, "be happy with Him for ever in Heaven." The seal and pledge of the Beatific Vision are given me every time I receive Holy Communion. "Corpus Domini nostri JESUS CHRISTI custodiat animam tuam in vitam æternam. Amen." "May the Body of our Lord JESUS CHRIST guard Thy soul *unto eternal life*."

This thought is enlarged in the last verse of St. Thomas' beautiful hymn of praise to the Blessed Sacrament, which forms the Sequence in the *Corpus Christi* Mass :—

Tuos ibi commensales Cohæredes et sodales Fac sanctorum civium.	Grant that we may be Thy mess-mates (Thy companions in the banquet) there, Thy joint-heirs and fellow-citizens with the Saints.

It is a longing desire that all the good gifts which He has given us here may be continued there. How much is contained in this priceless Gift of the Blessed Sacrament! The sacrifice of the Holy Mass, Holy Communion, the Tabernacle where JESUS always resides, the Holy Viaticum, Benediction, Exposition, Processions of the Blessed Sacrament—all are dependent on this Gift of gifts. By It He makes us partakers of His best gifts—yea, of His very nature, of Himself—and our heartfelt prayer is that all this may be *eternal* for us—that we may persevere to the end, that the Beatific Vision may be ours. We have sat down at Thy Table here, make us to share Thy Banquet there. Thou hast promised to make us joint-heirs with Thyself, we want Thee to know that our hearts, like that of the dying thief, are set on the kingdom! The Heavenly City is full of saints, and they are our fellow-citizens, who have received Thy gifts here on earth as we now receive them; we want one day to be blessed with the sight of Thy glory as they are.

I may seldom *feel* the thirst and desire that burnt so ardently in the soul of Thomas Aquinas, but I may be quite sure that I possess them if I have a *desire to have them* and if I am living my life with JESUS now—no secrets kept from Him, no joys or sorrows that He does not share. There can only be one ending to a life lived thus and that is the Beatific Vision.

Colloquy :—

"JESUS, Who, now veiled, I by faith descry,
What my soul doth thirst for, do not, Lord, deny,
That Thy face unveiled I at last may see
With the blissful vision blest, my GOD, of Thee."

THE SOURCE OF CHRIST'S GIFTS

Feast of the Sacred Heart.

(Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi)

"*Behold this Heart which has so loved men that It has spared nothing, even exhausting and consuming Itself to prove Its love for them. In return, from the greater part of men I receive nothing but ingratitude, shown by the coldness, the contempt, the irreverence, the sacrilege wherewith they treat Me in this Sacrament of love. But what I feel most deeply is that there are hearts consecrated to Me, which treat me thus. It is on this account that I ask thee that the first Friday after the Octave of the Blessed Sacrament may be kept as a special Feast in honour of My Heart; that thou wilt go to Communion on that day and make a reparation of honour to atone for the insults It has received while exposed upon the Altar. I promise that My Heart shall enlarge and pour forth Its divine love abundantly on all those who shall thus honour It, or cause It to be honoured.*" (Our Lord's words to Saint Margaret Mary, as she "was praying before the Blessed Sacrament on one of the days during the Octave" of Corpus Christi, June 1675.)

1*st Prelude.* Picture of Our Lord pointing to His Sacred Heart.

2*nd Prelude.* Grace to make reparation.

DEVOTION to the Sacred Heart has existed ever since St. John, Its first Apostle, heard Its throbbings while He lay on JESUS' heart at supper. In the thirteenth century, St. John told St. Gertrude what a glorious future lay before this devotion, and she and St. Mechtilde did much—perhaps more than any—to spread it. From the fourteenth century

onwards it was a favourite devotion with the Carthusian monks, and a theme upon which they loved to write. But until Our Lord appeared to Saint Margaret Mary, it had been a personal—almost a private—devotion, confined to a few privileged souls. To her, in the year 1675, Our Lord made it quite clear that He now wanted the Sacred Heart to have a public and official worship. Just one hundred years later Pope Clement XIII approved of a Mass and Office of the Sacred Heart; but it was not until the year 1856 that the Feast was inserted in the Calendar, by order of Pope Pius IX.

To-day, then, "is the day which the Lord hath made, let us be glad and rejoice therein" (Ps. cxvii. 24). He chose it Himself: "I ask that the first Friday after the Octave of the Blessed Sacrament be dedicated as a special Feast in honour of My Heart."

Since Rogation-tide we have been meditating on Christ's *Gifts*. To-day we are going to meditate on the *source* whence all these Gifts come. "Behold this Heart, which has so loved men that It has spared nothing." "What is there that I ought to do more that I have not done?" (Isaias v. 4).

Behold, how He loves us! "What shall I render to the Lord for all the things that He hath rendered to me?" (Ps. cxv. 12). How can I return such love? To-day the Church gives me an opportunity. Let me try, in this Meditation, to enter into the spirit and intentions of Our Lord when He fixed the day for this Feast.

Point I.—"Behold this Heart"

This is the Heart from which all your Gifts have come; this is the Heart which wore Itself out in your service; this is the Heart which has so loved you that It has spared nothing that It could possibly

give. It is a human Heart of flesh like your own, It pulsates as yours does, It is the expression of love —of My love for you—as yours is. Behold It! This is the Heart to which I allowed my "beloved disciple" to listen. This is the Heart which was opened with the lance, thus giving birth to the Church, My Bride, and making "two in One Flesh" (Gen. ii. 24). This is the Heart from which flowed Blood and Water, and they have never ceased to flow in a constant stream, giving and sustaining the life of My Church in every age by the Sacraments, especially those of Baptism and Penance. This is the Heart—the pierced Heart—the Heart with a wound which will never close—the Heart which is always open, so that My children may never lack a refuge from sin, temptation and the world. This is the Heart which has so loved men; for them It was created; every one of Its pulsations is for them; for them It was *broken;* and now It ever lives in Heaven, and will beat through all eternity for them. "Behold this Heart!"

Point II.—Consecrated Hearts

Why did Our Lord come and show His Heart to Saint Margaret Mary? It was not only to remind her, and us too, of all He had done for us, but to waken in our hearts sympathy, gratitude and love. He complained that He was not satisfied with the return He was getting from hearts that were consecrated to Him, and He showed His Heart as an incentive, as a reminder, as a warning, as something that was more likely than anything else to touch the conscience and the heart. He spoke of ingratitude, coldness, contempt, irreverence, even sacrilege, as the treatment He received—not from His enemies —no, then "I would verily have borne with it" (Ps. liv. 13), but from "hearts *consecrated* to Me." This is what He said He felt "most deeply."

Who are these consecrated ones who dare thus to treat Him, and when were they consecrated to Him?

First by the cleansing waters of Baptism, which made a sharp dividing line between them and the children of the world. They were given to Him then to be His brethren—His own Father's children—co-heirs with Himself, members of His mystical Body, set apart—consecrated—as temples of the Holy Ghost, and destined to live for ever with Him in Heaven. All these priceless gifts which men receive are the products of the love of the Sacred Heart—gifts of His Royal Bounty, freely given while the recipient is all unconscious of them. And when he is conscious, when he comes to years of discretion, and finds that he is the heir to vast estates, would it not seem natural that he should be overwhelmed with gratitude to Him Who loved him so much as to do all this for him? Ought he not to feel it a point of honour to regard himself as consecrated to His service? "In return, from the greater part of men I receive nothing but ingratitude."

But their consecration has gone further, if not men might excuse themselves by saying that they were unconscious, and had no responsibility in the matter. Of their own free will they have come forward and asked to receive the Holy Ghost from the hands of Christ's delegate, so that they might have the constant strength and grace necessary to live up to their high calling, as sons of God and members of Christ's Church and heirs of His Kingdom. And they *have* received Him, and have thus ratified the consecration, and said openly: We are soldiers of Christ, consecrated to His service. And yet, "in return, from the greater part of these hearts consecrated to Me I receive nothing but coldness."

Farther still this consecration has gone—over and over again they have renewed their pledge by coming to the King's Banquet, thus openly declaring their

loyalty to, and their union with Him, and that all His interests are theirs. Surely these hearts are a source of consolation to Him. Alas! it is of some of these in particular that He complains. "In return they treat Me with contempt, irreverence and sacrilege in this Sacrament of My love!"

Some hearts are consecrated to Him in a more special way still—even as His Body-guard. Such are the hearts of priests and religious. They have sworn to be His and His alone—to consecrate their lives entirely to His service—and this out of a personal love for Him. Surely these are exempt from His complaint? In Saint Margaret Mary's time it was not so—what He felt "most deeply" was that He was not getting the return He wanted from these hearts, which ought to have been so specially His own. And who dare say that there are not still, even in these specially consecrated hearts, things that His Heart feels "most deeply"? Behold this Heart! and in return—what?

It is evident that each one of us has food here for reflection and matter for self-examination. Lord, is it I? Yes, I know it is, and I cast myself into Thy Sacred Heart to ask for forgiveness. What wilt Thou have me to do to prove my sorrow and my gratitude and my love?

Point III.—Reparation

"It is on this account that I ask thee, that the first Friday after the Octave of the Blessed Sacrament be dedicated as a special Feast in honour of My Heart, and that thou wilt go to Communion on that day; and give It a reparation of honour to atone for the insults It has received while exposed upon the Altar."

This was the fresh aspect which Our Lord wished to be given to the devotion to the Sacred Heart—that of *Reparation*. It was for this that to-day's

Feast was instituted, and it is for this that the first Friday in each month is specially dedicated—for a Communion of Reparation.

To-day, then, the Church gives her children a great opportunity; to-day's Feast was instituted for one special object—to show honour to the Sacred Heart in reparation for the want of honour with which It has been treated. All Christendom to-day will be praising, honouring, reverencing, loving, adoring the Sacred Heart of JESUS, and the motive is *to make up*, to do something which will undo something else, to give all to Him, Who, hitherto, has had so little given. What am *I* going to do?

1. To make reparation for myself—to do all I can to show Him that I know how far short I have come from what He expects; to tell Him how sorry I am that I have so often hurt His loving Heart by my thoughtlessness and forgetfulness and indifference; and to multiply my acts of love and contrition to-day, thus forcing Him to see that I *do* love Him, that I *am* grateful, and that I *am* sorry.

2. To make reparation for others—to try by the warmth of my affection to make up to Him for the consecrated hearts which treat Him with coldness and indifference. To offer my little pains and difficulties and troubles, especially those that I feel so much—the unkindness and misunderstandings of others—to Him Who from the greater part of men has met with nothing but unkindness and misunderstanding, telling Him that I gladly bear them to lessen His pain and to give Him consolation.

3. To make from time to time a Communion of Reparation. What Our Lord complained of was the way He was treated by consecrated hearts in the *Sacrament of love*, and He asked His servant to make reparation in her Communions. Cannot I try to do the same? At any rate on "First Fridays"—days specially consecrated by Our Lord Himself—I might make a Communion of Reparation, letting

my one thought be *love* for Him Who has been so little loved by others. During my Watches before the Blessed Sacrament and at my Visits, I might let the thought of reparation have some place, hearing Jesus saying to me: "Behold this Heart which has so loved!" and seeing to it that then and there I give Him something in return.

Colloquy with the Sacred Heart. "I promise thee that My Heart shall enlarge and pour forth Its Divine love abundantly on all those who shall honour It or cause honour to be paid to It."

Resolution. To promise Our Lord in return something definite as a reparation of honour to His Sacred Heart.

Spiritual Bouquet. "Behold this Heart!"

THE END

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